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EDITORIAL

THE SCOTTISH JOURNAL OF THEOLOGY is born of the conviction that theology is a task urgent upon the whole Church. Few people to-day would pretend that the Church is seriously engaged upon this task. It is to be feared that many even of the ministry would be profoundly surprised by the suggestion that their business should be with theology at all, that their training in divinity did not give them all the theology they were likely to need, and that theology was not rightly left to the professors, savants, and theorists, who might be accorded a hearing when what they said happened to be of general interest.

Few conceptions could have a more disastrously weakening effect upon the work and witness of the Church, of which all are called to be members, and in which some are specially called to be servants and ministers. The Church to-day is charged with being irrelevant to life by those who have ceased to think its message either important or interesting. It is charged with irresolution by others who in differing degrees love and honour it, and deplore its ineffectiveness. There can be little doubt that these charges owe what validity they possess to an underlying uncertainty in the Church of what the message of the Gospel actually is, and how it should be expressed for this day and generation.

It is equally true that this fundamental uncertainty is not removed but only concealed by the endeavour to come to terms with other disciplines and systems of thought, whether the terms arranged be those of loan, concession, compromise, accommodation or surrender. Within their own limits and limitations, other disciplines are sure of themselves; but theirs is not a certainty that can be borrowed by Christians, and substituted for inherent certainty in matters of faith.

It is therefore of supreme importance that the Church should call in its vagrant thoughts and make sure of its own convictions. To do this imposes upon the Church a task which is theological. Theology is essentially the completion of the movement of faith in the sphere of thought—a completion which is necessary, since

our service of God is not with hand and heart alone, but also with mind; and which is imperative, since only so can the mind of Christ receive clear articulation in thought and word.

This theological task is in no sense an end in itself; and if it is understood as a matter of "truth for truth's sake," it is misunderstood. Manifestly the Church must discipline and direct not only its thought but its action, so that in both understanding and obedience it may grow into conformity with Christ. It cannot otherwise be in any real sense the "body of Christ." It is because Christ lives in the faith and life of the Church that theology becomes the unfolding of the truth in its thought and life, and is, at the same time, that strenuous act of understanding and obedience which constitutes the Church's service of God. Hence theology cannot properly be the pursuit of the dilettante or the recluse or the scientific specialist; it can be practised only by the active members of a living Church, for its growth in grace and knowledge, for the edification of its faith, and for the better proclamation of that faith in face of a world which has long since learned to ignore at its convenience any serious matters which are not resolutely and comprehensibly presented to it.

The Church is both *ecclesia audiens* and *ecclesia docens*, and the Word of God is the object of both activities. The Church is *docens* in that it proclaims the Gospel, and *audiens* in that nothing may be proclaimed which has not first been heard. If this is so, we may never be afraid or ashamed of the words *reformation* and *dogma*. A Church that really listens to the Word of God has already accepted in principle the possibility and need of reformation, and in fact continually exposes itself to the Word of God in order that its life may be perpetually brought under review and judgment, and at the same time receive correction and renewal. Thus theology takes on the character of a humble enquiry whether that by and for which the Church lives is really that by and for which God would have His Church live.

Submitting thus to the action of the Word of God upon its inner life, the Church discovers what must be said to the outer world. Though this may be distinguishable from what is said to the Church itself, it is not different from it, and must be grounded wholly upon it. The Church engages in the discipline of dogmatics in order to make sure that what is said in proclamation has its origin and basis in the Gospel. The word "dogma"

is for many distasteful. Yet it would be impossible to deny that many who turn away from Christian dogma with distaste are soon observed to be flirting with dogma of another complexion, and quickly fall victims to the concealed influence of a *Weltanschauung* incompatible with Christianity. Men cannot do without dogma, and they revolt from one, only to fall into the arms of another. When the inherent antipathy of the natural man to the Gospel and its claims has been taken into account, the remaining distaste to Christian dogma is seen to be less antipathy to dogma as such, than the entirely understandable disinclination to submit to formulations of Christianity which are antiquated, or to be persuaded by a monotonous persistence that will not take the trouble to translate the unchanging truth of Christianity into current forms and language. This can be accomplished only by having constant recourse to the living Word. It is in listening here that the Church will be able to mint out of broken human language and antiquated categories the new coinage which may convey more effectively to a needy world the unspeakable riches of Christ.

Such a theological task is the concern of no single class or clique within the Church. It is the duty neither of the professoriate of Divinity Halls alone, nor of any group of experts. It is the concern of the whole Church. The response appropriate to this concern is given as the whole Church grapples seriously with the theological task of interpreting the Gospel message, and of hammering out the terms for its proclamation and application to men of to-day. Hence exemption can be granted to no section of the Church, just as exclusive responsibility may be laid on none, though of course there will be distinction of function among the different sections. Elders and church-members, preachers and professors, all have parts to play in the high but also humble theological task of rediscovery and of proclamation. As it is achieved, the Church will be able to make known with greater clarity, conviction and unanimity, the things that belong to our peace.

It is clear that open and frank discussion on the part of the Church is necessary for the achievement of this end. What is needed is a deeply serious engagement with the issues of the day, and a real wrestling with them, and a refusal to let them go until we are granted blessing. There is need, therefore, for some

venue where theological discussion can take place. It is the hope of those responsible for its appearance, that the JOURNAL may provide both a place for such discussion and a stimulus to it. It need hardly be said that no theological position is represented exclusively by the sponsors of this project, and that their one desire is that where difference of opinion exists truth may prevail.

Primarily the JOURNAL is intended to be an organ through which the ministers and members of the Church of Scotland may bring the life, thought and work of their Church to the test of Word and Spirit. Hence the exegesis of Holy Scripture and the presentation of Biblical theology must clearly occupy a central place. Along with these must go the discussion of the unfolding of the truth in the historical Church, that is of dogma. Because this is a catholic activity, contributions will be welcomed from members of every branch of the Holy Catholic Church, and invitation is hereby extended to all who care to join in this humble waiting upon the Word of God.

The intention is that the JOURNAL should carry articles of three distinguishable types: Dogmatic Theology, Biblical Theology, and Applied Theology. It is evident that each section is related to the others, and that a Church Theology can afford to neglect none. For while dogmatic theology is the extension of Biblical theology under the promised guidance of the Holy Spirit, both find completion in the life of the Church; for all the practical problems of the Church involve theological issues.

Nothing but good can come from fruitful debate concerning the central tenets of the faith. For the promotion of such discussion the JOURNAL is designed, and to the service of Him Who is the Way, the Truth and the Life humbly dedicated.

THE EDITORS

THE OFFICE OF CHRIST IN PREDESTINATION

by The Rev. J. K. S. REID, B.D.

The title is suggested by Saint Paul's phrase (*Ephesians* 1.4) "according as he hath chosen us in him," that is in Christ. The object of this essay is to point out the meagre use made of the phrase and of the idea it conveys by the classic doctrine of Predestination, and to show the deplorable consequences that follow.

1. Calvin

It would of course be absurd to suggest that Calvin totally neglects the thought that Predestination is in Christ. Rather this is a presupposition in all he has to say about it, at least in this sense, that, challenged whether he held Predestination to be in Christ, he would unhesitatingly have affirmed that it was. But it is the fate of many presuppositions to fall into the background, if not into forgetfulness, and to exercise less influence than they should do. It is the view of the present writer that the Calvinist theology failed to draw fully upon the implications of the presupposition that Predestination is *in Christ*.

Two questions are well asked at this point: What is the relation of those elected to Christ? and: What is Christ's part in their election?

(i) Here the text which has already been quoted is cited by Calvin: We are *in Christo electi*, and we are *in Christo adoptati* (*Inst.* 3.22.1). And in 3.22.2, the elect are said to be again "chosen in Christ." Further, the elect are given to Christ, and in this keeping they are safe: "This is the Father's will, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing" (*John* 6.39; 3.23.10). In all this so far, it is to be noted, the relation of the elect to Christ is determined in the terms of Holy Scripture. Not much has been said to explain further this relation.

An advance is made when (3.21.7) the elect are referred to as *Christi membri*, and as thus *capiti suo insiti*, united to their

head. Here a more integral relation is introduced. It is " in the head " that " the heavenly Father has bound his elect to each other, and united them to himself by an indissoluble bond." This relation of the elect to their " head " is not rightly regarded as adventitious to their election. The suggestion is present, though it has to wait for expression later, that the election of members occurs in the election of their head. In the election of Christ, that is, the election of men consists. Hence already a hint is given of the rôle which Christ plays in election.

(ii) The passage is thus made to the second question: What is Christ's part in election? Here Calvin summons a large number of expressions for duty. Most general of all, Christ, as the " Lamb foreknown before the foundation of the world," is the *direction* from which salvation comes. " What," exclaims Calvin, " can be more absurd and uninteresting (*frigidius*) than God's looking from on high to see from what quarter salvation would come to mankind?" Further, Christ is represented as *testimony* of election (3.24.9). Calvin, referring to *Luke* 10.20, says: " We know from the testimony of Christ, that the names of God's children have been written in the book of life from the beginning." And this character of Christ receives other occasional mention. A character possessing more substance than the two already mentioned is that in which Christ appears as the *conveyor* of the grace in virtue of which election takes place, without any consideration of works: "Who hath called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus, before the world began" (2 *Timothy* 1.9; 3.22.2). Again Christ is represented as the *source of the assurance of election.* This assurance of and in election, which was, one may say, a cardinal property of election for Luther and Lutheranism, comes to expression in Calvin, and Christ is given His place in securing it. The soul's " restless curiosity " and " fatigue " is allayed and relieved, and " rest," " repose " and " tranquillity " is offered by the fact that it is " in Christ " that we are adopted and chosen to be God's children. Thus (3.24.5) " the persons, therefore, whom God has adopted as his children, he is said to have chosen, not in themselves, but in Christ; because it was impossible for him to love them,

except in him; or to honour them with the inheritance of his kingdom, unless previously made partakers of him." And (3.24.6): " If, therefore, we want to ascertain whether God is concerned for our salvation, let us inquire whether he has committed us to Christ, whom he constituted the only Saviour of all his people. Now, if we doubt whether Christ has received us into his charge and custody, he obviates this doubt by freely offering himself as our Shepherd, and declaring that if we hear his voice, we shall be numbered among his sheep. We therefore embrace Christ, thus kindly offered to us and advancing to meet us; and he will number us with his sheep, and preserve us in his fold. But yet we feel anxiety for our future state. . . But Christ has delivered us from this anxiety, for these promises undoubtedly belong to the future: 'All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me. . .' "

So too negatively, as Christ is the source of our assurance, it must be held that those who apparently " were given him by the Father," but who eventually fall away (Calvin is thinking of the " son of perdition," 3.24.27) " never adhered to Christ with that confidence of heart which, we say, gives assurance of our election." There is of course a flagrant *petitio principii* here.

So far the rôle of Christ in election has not been fully defined. It is steadily maintained that election is by means of Christ. But the exact part He plays in conveying it has not come to expression. We could, that is, still ask the question: Does Christ effect election in any way, or is His part the merely passive one of purveying it? and not quite know how to answer it.

But other aspects of the rôle of Christ in election fall to be mentioned. Christ is the *bearer of the message* which divides definitively between the elect and the non-elect. It is round about Him that the world divides. He is the watershed at which men take up their positions facing one direction or the other. Thus (3.23.13): " Christ commands men to believe in him. . . Christ had some particular meaning in saying: 'Who hath ears to hear, let him hear' (*Matthew* 23.9). Therefore when we exhort and preach, persons endued with ears readily obey; and those who are destitute of them exhibit an accomplishment of Scripture, that hearing they hear not." This is

the Calvinist parallel to the *hunc audite* which makes a more frequent appearance in Lutheranism. (*Matthew* 17.5, which contains the *hunc audite*, is for the most part used in Calvinism for the purpose of emphasising the teaching function of Christ. Thus 3.20.48 cites the text, calling Christ the *optimus magister, quem nobis doctorem Pater praefecit et quem unum auscultari voluit.*)

Calvin elsewhere calls Christ *speculum electionis.* Thus (3.22.1): " there is the brightest example of gratuitous election in the Head of the Church himself." The better translation of *speculum* is perhaps " mirror." (Cf. *De aet. Dei pred.* (Corp. Ref. 36, C.8, p. 266f.): *Salvator ipse Dei filius praeclarissimum est gratiae et praedestionis lumen*, where the corresponding French has *miroir.* The English translation is " luminary.") Christ thus is where we see reflected the election which singles out these certain members of mankind upon whom the grace of God lights. As *speculum praedestinationis*, however, Christ performs no merely passive rôle, and so the strictness of the analogy breaks down. He does not only reflect the election which is also available to men; He was in fact " gratuitously invested with this high honour, that he might afterwards render others partakers of the gifts bestowed upon him." Somewhere and somehow in the election of Christ, there is involved our election. The election which Christ receives is one which at least He transmits to others who are in that relation to Him which members of a body have to the head. Clearly this is to go further in assigning to Christ an effective rôle than anything hitherto mentioned.

The next rôle assigned to Christ is a daring one, which Calvin mentions, but hardly emphasises, and which I have not found repeated in the *Institutes.* It is the rôle of *auctor electionis.* Thus (3.23.7): " Christ represents (*facit*) himself as the author of election." It is a right which He claims for Himself: " though Christ introduces himself in his mediatorial capacity, yet he claims to himself the right of election;" and this evidently on equal terms with the Father, for Calvin adds: " the right of election, in common with the Father." This is indeed a remarkable statement, and had it attained in Calvinism the place of importance to which its character entitles it, there is little question that much of the controversy over Predestination would have been avoided. But in fact, it only appears once

in the *Institutes*, the flicker of a flame which promises more light, but whose promise is never fulfilled.

There is finally the suggestion contained in the passage already cited (2.21.7): it is as " members of Christ " that men are elect; and, the same thing from the other side, Christ as " their head " secures their " salvation," *i.e.* in the context, election. Clearer definition comes when this passage is collated with 3.22.1, already quoted in connection with Christ as *speculum electionis*. Election is ours because we are members of a Head who is Himself elect. His election avails for us, in that we are His members. Negatively, " it is evident that all are not members of Christ " (3.22.2); and it appears that, while the fact of choice implies " that some are separated from others," the inherent distinction upon which the separation is grounded is the individual's relation to Christ, that is his membership or lack of membership in Him. This will again occupy our attention later.

2. Estimate

It is not unfair to say that what has been said comprises virtually all that Calvin in the *Institutes* has to say about the part played by Christ in Predestination. When this is realised, it is impossible to suppress surprise and even alarm. There are, as we have seen, some rôles for which Christ is cast that are obviously ineffective, in the sense that nothing is really inaugurated or even effected by the One who plays them. At most, Christ in these parts simply purveys something to others in the preparation of which He Himself has had no hand. To this class belong the representations of Christ as the direction from which salvation comes, as the testimony of election, as the conveyor of grace, and as the source of assurance in election. But there is a class of rôles which is more promising. In them, Christ is regarded in a way which forbids us to say He is a mere channel of approach for something in which He has no constructive part to play. As the bearer of the message which distinguishes the elect from the not elect, as the *speculum electionis* which " renders others partakers of the gifts bestowed upon him," as the *auctor electionis*, and as the Head who secures election for His members, Christ plays a really effective part in the matter of election. One feels that

if the lines laid down for Christ's office by such conceptions had only been followed out and developed, the result would have been to achieve for Christ a secure and effective part in the design and preparation of the decree of election.

Why are these lines not pressed to their conclusion? The reason seems to be that Calvin's interest and intention does not lead him in this direction. We are compelled to recognise that Calvin's main interest does not lie in so employing Christ, if we may so speak, as to mollify the harsh asperities of his doctrine. There appear to be three quite other cardinal interests which govern all that Calvin has to say about the doctrine.

(i) He wishes to make the point that election is determined by nothing in the elect themselves. Thus in 3.22.1: "What," he asks, "will God find in us to induce him to elect us?"; and the rhetorical question is left unanswered, but capped by the quotation of *Ephesians* 1.4: "chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world." So too 3.22.2: "By saying that they were elected before the creation of the world, he [St. Paul] precludes every consideration of merit." And 3.22.3: "Wherever this decree of God reigns, there can be no consideration of any works"; and *ibid:* "God's goodness altogether anticipates men, finding nothing in them, either past or future, to conciliate his favour towards them."

(ii) Second, Calvin's wish is to vindicate the *certitudo electionis*—what he alternatively calls *solida fiducia* (3.21.1). This he does at a number of points, but particularly in the passages already cited at 3.24.4ff. "Some persons," he says, "to obtain certainty respecting the counsel of God . . . preposterously wish to soar above the clouds" (3.24.3). "We therefore embrace Christ, thus kindly offered to us," etc. Thus the *solatium* and *illa in sanctis gloriandi fiducia* which Bk. 1 (17.11) finds to rest on the divine *destinatio*, is narrowed down for the believer, and at the same time strengthened, as it grounds itself upon *praedestinatio*.

(iii) Calvin's third interest is the defence of the doctrine against the charge of injustice. Let the following stand as typical of so much that might be quoted. "If all whom the Lord predestines to death are in their natural condition liable to the sentence of death, what injustice do they complain of receiving from him?" (3.23.3). "Their perdition depends on

the Divine predestination in such a manner, that the cause and matter of it are found in themselves. . . Man falls, therefore, according to the appointment of Divine Providence; but he falls by his own fault" (3.23.8). "They act preposterously, who, in seeking for the origin of their condemnation, direct their views to the secret recesses of the Divine counsel, and overlook the corruption of nature which is its real source (*scaturit*)" (3.23.9). "The reprobate suffer nothing but what is consistent with the most righteous judgment of God" (3.24.14). And finally (3.21.6): "none can require of [God] an equal distribution of grace, the inequality of which demonstrates it to be truly gratuitous."

It will be readily appreciated how entirely characteristic of Calvin are these passages just quoted. And it ought not to be overlooked that they are typical just because they deal with the questions which really occupy Calvin's attention, and in whose direction he has turned his face. But in doing so, we may say, he did not really come to face the question of the function of Christ.

Thus it comes about that when the grounds of Predestination are sought, it is to God that Calvin directs us. It is at the cost of a certain effort that we elicit from Calvin what Christ's rôle in the matter is. But the part that God plays in it stares us in the face on almost every page that Calvin wrote. "Predestination we call the eternal decree of God by which he has determined in himself (*apud se constitutum*), what he would have to become of every individual of mankind" (3.21.5). "By an eternal and immutable counsel, God has once for all (*semel*) determined, both whom he would admit to salvation, and whom he would condemn to destruction" (3.21.7). "When God fixes your salvation in himself alone (*in se uno statuat*), why will you have recourse to your own merits?" (3.22.6). "God favours his elect because he will, and has mercy because he will . . . God is excited to mercy by no other motive (*Deum non alia ratione moveri*) than his own will to be merciful" (3.22.8). And finally: "We must always return at last to the sovereign determination of God's will, the cause of which is hidden in himself (*ad solum divinae voluntatis arbitrium, cuius causa sit in ipso abscondita*)" (3.23.4).

Despite all that is said concerning the place of Christ in

election, the *Leitmotiv* of Calvin's presentation of the doctrine is that Predestination belongs to God. Predestination is certainly in Christ, and even *per Christum*, and in a sense *propter Christum;* but for its primary grounds we have to penetrate, warily it is true, into the *divinae sapientiae adyta* (inmost recesses), and there we find it lodged in an *arcanum consilium*. It would, I believe, be quite wrong to suggest that this *arcanum consilium* is that of a God in distinction from Christ. "We shall find no assurance of our election," says Calvin (3.24.5), ". . . even in God the Father, considered alone, abstractedly from the Son." But in the last resort, it is that of a God into whose counsels Christ has not been admitted, and the inmost recesses of whose wisdom Christ has not illuminated.

Calvin shows himself not unaware of the importance of this point. "We have no reason to fear," he declares (3.24.5), "the least variation in the declarations of [Christ's] word from that will of the Father, which is the object of our inquiry"; and thus he may be said to manifest a certain nervousness concerning the strength of the link between the two. But it is impossible to say that he so effectively strengthened the link as to remove all objection.

The weakness is evident in a chance phrase which Calvin is at least once betrayed into using (3.22.1): "*gratiam istam Dei praecedit electio*": thus, election precedes grace. If this is true, then one's worst forebodings are fulfilled. The God and Father of Jesus Christ is a God of grace. Who, then, is this God who determines men's election before grace becomes operative?

3. Calvinism [1]

In the main, the writers in the Calvinist tradition add little that is new to the doctrine. But they do add what amounts to a series of very interesting footnotes. For Polanus (*Syntagma theologiae Christianae* 4.7), the *causa efficiens primaria* of Predestination is God Himself, while the *causa προηγουμένη* is God's free will, *i.e.* the *decretum Dei absolutum*. "The decree of God,"

[1] Most of the references made in this and the next section are to be found in Heppe's *Schriften zur reformierten Theologie, Band II: Dogmatik der evangelisch-reformierten Kirche*, 1861, and 1935 edited by E. Bizer. The work of each writer is once named, and further reference is to the same work, except where otherwise stated.

according to Wendelin (*Christianae theologiae systema maius* 293), " is both absolute and not absolute: absolute in respect of God's good pleasure, and not absolute in respect of the means, among which are the merit of Christ and faith." Christ is thus accorded a function in the elective decree, but it is a function of means. In general, Predestination is regarded as *duplex* (as Mastricht *Theoretico-practica theologia* 3.2.24). Attempts were indeed made to limit the doctrine to single Predestination of the elect, as *e.g.* by Hyperius, for whom (*Methodi theologiae* p. 183) Predestination is *simpliciter* the decree " by which God elects us in Himself, before the foundation of the world, according to the good pleasure of His will, that He might adopt us to be sons through Christ." But this type of definition is regarded by orthodox Calvinists as defective.

The place of Christ in Election is the occasion of much diversity in detail, but there is a very wide consensus of opinion about salient features. Thus Polanus (4.9) writes: " The election of men to eternal salvation is that Predestination, by which God from eternity gave to Christ those men on whom He wished to have mercy, that He might give them eternal life; that is, that Predestination by which from eternity He decreed within Himself to receive of old some men out of the rest of mankind, and exempting them from their own common destruction to adopt them in Christ to be sons, and wished to call them effectively to communion in Christ, to justify them in Christ, and to glorify them, that they might see the glory of Christ in eternity, and might in Him be partakers of the heavenly inheritance and of eternal life." With this, the Canons of Dordrecht (7) agree. But they add something which gives further content to the function Christ exercises in election: " election is the immutable resolve of God, by which before the foundation of the world. . . He chose a certain number of men, not better or more worthy than others, but like others lying in a common misery, in Christ, whom He appointed also from eternity as mediator and head of all the elect, and as the foundation of their salvation." The addition is the mention of Christ as the " head " of the elect. It is to be noted that Christ is not the foundation of election. This idea is explicitly rejected by Heidegger (*Corpus theologiae* 5.32),

who notes that Holy Scripture sets Christ up as cause and foundation of salvation, and of the Church, but nowhere of election.

The function of Christ in election is further explained by reference to the economy of the Trinity in the matter. Thus Heidegger (5.28): "With regard to the Trinitarian economy, divine election is called election by the Father simply, and is attributed to the Son on account of His being the solemn promise on behalf of the elect, and to the Holy Spirit on account of His being their attestation (*sponsio* and *obsignatio*)". More simply (*Heppe op. cit.* 1861 p. 112, 1935 p. 121): Election belongs to the Father, promise to the Son, and attestation to the Holy Spirit.

While of course the ground of election is not to be found in any work, quality, or possession in us, neither is it to be found in the merits of Christ, but solely in the good pleasure of God (Heppe p. 112, p. 122). So Heidegger (5.32): "Nor has our election any kind of meritorious cause outside God (*nec electio nostri extra Deum causam meritoriam omnino ullam habet*); in God Himself it has no other cause or foundation than God's love of the Son and of us in the Son, which is His sheer good pleasure." A refinement is sometimes added: thus Waläus (Heppe p. 126, p. 137) declares that, though we "are not elect on account of (*propter*) the merit of Christ," we are yet elect "not without respect to (*nonnisi cum respectu ad*) the merit of Christ, by which (*per quod*) we are redeemed from our misery."

To consider the object of election is to have fresh light thrown on the part that Christ has to play in it. "The person of Christ," says Heppe (p. 112, p. 122), "is the fundamental strong-point (*Grundfeste*) of election. Indeed He is Himself in a certain sense the alone object of election, in so far as all those are elect, whom the Father has given to the Son, and whom He has planted in Him from eternity through the Holy Spirit." Thus Mastricht (3.3.8): "the object of election is the complete mystical Christ (*totum Christum mysticum*), that is Christ with all His own." And Heidegger (5.30): "the first-born brother is not elect without the other brothers, but rather all in one indivisible decree are foreknown and elect."

As with Calvin, so in his followers, the function of Christ in conveying assurance concerning election gives rise to almost

tender oases in an otherwise somewhat arid country. Since the believer has the power of the word of God and the communion of the life of Christ within himself, and thus lives the redeemed and sanctified life of a child of God, he experiences the peace of God which fills his soul, and so enjoys the feeling of complete security regarding his election. Scegedin thus speaks of the *certitudo electionis* (*Theologiae sincerae loci communes* p. 117): " The certainty of our election stands in Christ Jesus. For while our salvation was always hidden in God, yet Christ is the channel through whom it flows out to us, and is by faith received by us, so that it lodges firm and certain in our hearts. It is well therefore to cast the eyes of faith here, that we may know for certain that we are of the rank of the sons of God. For in itself divine Predestination is hidden; only in Christ is it manifested." Thus Christ is accorded the office of exhibiting our election, and applying it with resulting comfort to the soul.

4. Estimate

The outer extremes between which the office of Christ in election is seen to lie are wide apart. On the one side, there is the surprising statement of Bucan (*Institutiones theologicae* 36.16): *Causa princeps electionis—Deus* (*John* 6.27, 44; 17.9; *Ephesians* 1.4)*—et Christus, quia non est alius Deus a Patre* (*John* 15.16)*—et Spiritus S.* (*Acts* 13.2). On the other side, there is the equally surprising statement quoted by Waläus for refutation (*Loci communes s. theologiae* p. 380ff): " Some hold that by ' in Christ ' is meant that Christ is the substratum of election, as He is the foundation of the conferring of the salvation to which we are elected, inasmuch as Christ is to be considered as only then elected *post nostram electionem*." Against this, Waläus urges: " that we should be elect before our head is elect, seems unfitting to the nature of the head, which as it is first in dignity is also first in order."

Neither extreme, however, represents the main current of thought, and between them there lies the main body of Calvinist opinion. How is this main body to be judged? Must not the judgment be that of the two extremes just mentioned, the main body of thought lies nearer that cited by Waläus than that represented by the simple statement of

Bucan? Must it not be that, while stopping short of assigning to the election of Christ a place posterior to the election of men, Christ is not allotted His rightful part within the decree of election itself?

As one passes in review the various rôles assigned to Christ in election, it is difficult not to despair. In every one, the function of Christ is to carry out something already fixed and definitive. At one end of the scale, Christ is merely the exhibitor of a decision already made in an eternity in which He has Himself been, even if existent, at least inoperative. At the other end, His rôle is to give effect to a decree in whose formation He has apparently had no hand. It is the *haereditas damnosa* taken over from Calvin himself: no less here than there, decree is prior to grace.

A study of what is said about reprobation, the other side of the *praedestinatio duplex*, only confirms this impression. Reprobation, according to Wolleb (*Christianae theologiae compendium* 23) is for didactic purposes to be regarded as composed of two acts: the denial of unmerited grace (*praeteritio*); and the apportionment of merited punishment (*praedamnatio*). But for the most part, this duplicity in reprobation is more than a merely didactic device, and corresponds to something ontologically real. Keckermann proceeds thus (*Systema SS. theologiae* 308): "the first act is the divine purpose of forsaking some and abandoning them to themselves, this act being absolute, dependent upon the alone and absolute will of God. The other act is the divine purpose of damning them *propter peccatum*, this act being not absolute but connected with and conditioned by sin. (310): We are rightly said to be saved *propter electionem*; but it cannot with equal fittingness be said that any are damned *propter reprobationem*. Election is the positive principle of salvation; but reprobation properly speaking is not the principle but only the removal of the principle. Nor are we able rightly to say that men are ordained from eternity to damnation, unless we add: *propter peccatum*." "The causes of reprobation and of damnation are different (Heidegger 5.59), that of the first being sin alone."

It thus appears that the ground of damnation is to be found *quadam ratione* within the non-elect themselves, *viz.* in the sin of which (there is never any hesitation or dubiety about

this) they are the author, and for which they bear the guilt. It follows that Christ is shut out not only from the decree, but also from the execution of the decree. The place allotted to Him is even more meagre than in the case of election. The thing is put at its plainest by Wolleb (22f.) "Christ as θεάνθρωπος . . . is the medium of the execution of election." "The decree concerning our being saved is *praedestinatio ad finem;* but the decree concerning Christ, in as much as He is given to us as head, is *praedestinatio ad media.*" But this rôle of medium of execution is withdrawn from Christ in reprobation, and is taken up by *infidelitas:* "*ut Christus causa est non electionis, sed salutis, ita infidelitas causa est non reprobationis, sed damnationis. Differt damnatio a reprobatione ut medium executionis a decreto.*"

Secure in at least a tenuous foothold in the execution of the decree of election, Christ is allotted no part in the decree of reprobation. At no point throughout its course, from its initial conception to its eventual accomplishment, does Christ have any hand or part in it. The decree is conceived, and it comes into effect, and it is executed, without apparently any kind of intervention from the side of Christ.

Yet this has to be qualified in one respect. A purely negative rôle is indeed sometimes assigned to Christ. Distinction is made of an active and a passive part to be played. The active part is allotted to the reprobate themselves; Christ's only part is to suffer their neglect. Thus the question is raised: what are the means through which God accomplishes and implements His decree of reprobation? Heidegger answers as follows (5.65): "*desertio* of the reprobate, *separatio* of them from Christ and from the grace of redemption or reconciliation, *omissio vocationis* or at least *vocatio inefficax*, *retentio* of sins, *excaecatio sive induratio et finalis impoenitentia.*" Such a formidable list of means, the reader may well think, leaves the reprobate with extremely slender chances. If the Reformers thought that reprobation was coming a man's way, they did not care to leave him many loopholes for escape.

The provision of these means for effecting the divine decree is the evident responsibility of God and the reprobate themselves. Their respective shares of responsibility is for our purpose a matter of indifference. The *desertio*, with which the list begins, is no doubt to be ascribed to God, and the

impoenitentia, with which it ends, to the reprobate themselves, while it would be difficult to assign the exact degrees of responsibility in the case of the *induratio*. But one thing is clear, namely that Christ has no active part to play here. Where He is mentioned, it is in a purely passive rôle, as the object to which the reprobate manifest neglect or from which they are alienated. So Bucan (26.39) mentions among the six " means peculiar to the reprobation of man for the execution of the divine decree " the following: " *'Απιστία, infidelitas, sive alienatio et separatio a Christo* "; and nowhere among the other five does the name of Christ appear.

Consideration of the sombre side of the *praedestinatio duplex*, therefore, only confirms what has already been said, with a slight but unprofitable addition. There is a decree in whose determination grace has had no hand. In effecting this decree, Christ is offered the part of agent in the case of those predetermined by election to salvation. But He bears no relation to those whose predetermined end is damnation *propter peccatum*, except the negative one of being that from which these are alienated. This is a characteristic which penetrates Calvinistic thought from top to bottom and from beginning to end. We have seen its forbidding presence as the doctrine issues into reprobation. But it is already there at the outset. Wolleb in his definition of Predestination writes thus (p. 20 f.): " predestination of men is that by which God from the human race created in His own image, but by its own freewill about to fall into sin, *alios quidem per Christum aeternum servare, alios vero sibi in miseria sua relictos aeternum damnare constituit.*" This fatal *alios . . . alios*, or rather this fatal *alios per Christum . . . alios* (*simpliciter*), shows that at this early point the mischief is already done: the position of the reprobate is defined only by negation over against Christ.

The function assigned to Christ in election can, then, be summarised in this way. In the case of the elect, Christ is the means through which effect and application is given to a decree, whose primary grounds are to be found *in arcano consilio Dei*. The later Calvinists did no more than Calvin himself to achieve for Christ a secure and effective place in the preparation of this decree. From this it follows that, in the case of the reprobate, Christ can be allotted no more than

the most purely negative part. He stands the Figure who is nothing to them that pass by. If Christ plays no effective part in election, since in its determination He has no hand, for the same reason, He plays no effective part in reprobation. Thus is obviated the very grave difficulty of a doctrine, which however is altogether indispensable, holding that, not only election, but also reprobation is *in Christo*.

(*To be concluded*)

THE CHRISTIAN UNDERSTANDING OF TRUTH

by Professor D. M. MACKINNON, M.A.

At first sight the above title may suggest a gross presumption. For surely what is true is true, and there is an end of it. How can there be such a thing as an "understanding of truth," let alone a Christian understanding of truth? And yet there have been such things as "theories of truth," attempts to analyse the notion, ending perhaps as analysis so often does in the paradox of tautology, "truth is truth," yet useful and illuminating as far as they go. But if we grant that truth-theory forms an admissible chapter in the philosophy of logic, can we talk of such a thing as a Christian understanding of truth? After all truth remains truth. And if we speak of an understanding of truth, and then predicate Christian of it, are we using the word understanding in such a way that theory is substitutable for it? There is a suggestion in the word understanding of a certain condescension towards what is understood, a pigeon-holing, as if we would like to say: "Yes, now we have got truth nicely docketed." Whereas perhaps a "theory of truth" does no more than help us to dissolve some puzzle or puzzles connected with the notion.

So any attempt to defend the concept of a Christian understanding of truth must begin by some account of the sort of jobs truth-theories have tried to do, and then explain the kind of connection that obtains between such theories

and what we call an "understanding of truth." Now traditionally in modern philosophy there are three recognised "theories of truth"—the correspondence theory, the coherence theory, and the pragmatic theory. We can perhaps look at these in turn.

1. The Correspondence Theory.

This is sometimes briefly described as the theory that identifies truth with the *adaequatio intellectus ad rem*. Alternatively it is described as the theory which maintains that a true proposition is one that corresponds with the facts.

Now there is a great deal here that accords pretty well with commonsense. Indeed we do very often find ourselves treating the phrases—thinking correctly—and thinking in accordance with the facts—as synonymous. To speak of truth in this way enables us to do justice to the external reference of our thinking. We do find it hard to get away from the thought that our thinking is judged by the extent to which it accords or discords with something over against it. Of course this language is metaphorical; but again and again in philosophical theory we find ourselves compelled to use metaphorical language, to say something that is so intimate that we have no recognised conventions for saying it. Of course a correspondence theory must assume a direct commerce with fact; it must allow that now and again we do break through the circle of our ideas and are able to check them by direct observation of what is. But again it carries commonsense with it here.

Yet there are serious difficulties in the way of this theory. For instance—how is the notion of correspondence to be understood? What sort of correspondence is in view? Suppose we analyse thinking as the entertaining of propositions, and then ask what the nature of the correspondence is between proposition and fact. Is it like the correspondence of a photograph, of a diagram, of a portrait? We speak of a photograph as a perfect likeness, of a portrait as very revealing, of a diagram as exactly representing some spatial distribution. It seems very difficult to use comparable language where true propositions are concerned. Perhaps propositions expressed by sentences in which onomatopoetic words occur

come near pictures. The dog growled: for instance. But even there we have to allow the tense inflexion, indicating the pastness of the event as a difficulty. And of course the difficulties become insuperable when we consider even the simplest negative or hypothetical statement.

Yet perhaps these are criticisms of the way correspondence is conceived rather than of the theory itself. After all a good deal of philosophising does take the shape of freeing oneself from the tyranny of inexact models. Again and again what is said has to be immediately unsaid. Say, if you like, wishing to contrast radically inductive from deductive procedure, that induction is only a series of lucky guesses and immediately you have to go on to distinguish a rationally based and confirmed conclusion from a chance success based on reliance on the predictions of an astrologer. Say that truth is correspondence, and immediately you have to qualify it. So far so good; and by such qualifications you may deliver the theory from the kind of criticisms which can be brought against it on the ground of the difficulty of applying it as initially understood. Yet the trouble is that such deliverance may end by robbing the theory of any point at all. And this becomes much more serious when one passes from the simple and complex propositions of everyday concern to the theories of exact science. What of laws of motion, of the structure of gasses and so on? If one says that Newton's gravitational law has yielded to Einstein's, is he saying that the one is found better to correspond to the facts than the other? And if so, what does one mean? How is that kind of correspondence related to the sort of correspondence we claim in the case of such a statement as—the cat is not in the library? What is common between the two correspondences and what is different? Is one going to be driven to abandon correspondence where these sorts of statement are concerned? Or to retain it so that it becomes so rarefied a thing as to make the definition of truth as correspondence mere *pointless* tautology?

2. The Coherence Theory.

Now at first sight this theory seems to begin where the former broke down. It seems to begin, that is to say, as an account of the truth of theories. A critic might say that the

champion of the correspondence theory was operating in terms of a theory of unit propositions, in terms even of a Wittgenstein-Russell conception of atomic and molecular propositions. For such a theory atomic propositions formed so many hard basic units, and corresponding to them were so many hard basic facts. All the dynamism of thought, involved in theory-construction, is left out, or else it is given no more than the status of a *nisus* towards the mere conventional organisation of the basic propositions. The coherentist almost begins by the recommendation to think less of the theory as a recipe for the organisation of propositions than of the proposition as itself an embryonic theory. Certainly he aims at forcing on our attention the necessity of offering a theory of truth that is adequate to the actual procedures of our thinking.

So often the champion of correspondence writes as if thinking consisted in no more than the mechanical combination of propositions. No room is left for the actual process of discovery, for the many-dimensional character of thinking, for the operation of what Collingwood has called presuppositions. If we develop our theory of truth under guidance of such a logic, we may altogether distort its nature. The coherentist drives us back to think of thinking as we know it in ourselves, and to judge a theory of truth by the extent to which it captures the sense of that thinking.

It is now perfectly true that most coherentists go much further than that. Indeed the very title—coherence—implies that they do. The coherentist traditionally identifies truth with a completely coherent system of judgments, a practice which seems to have three highly questionable implications:

(i) It ignores the very real differences with which we are familiar between different sorts of system. There is all the difference in the world between *e.g.* a non-Euclidean geometry where the theorems are derived from the postulates in accordance with an exact logical method, and a system of physics which is ultimately judged partly at least by the extent to which we are able to derive from it experientially verifiable statements.

(ii) It fails altogether to do justice to the corresponding differences between kinds of coherence. The notion of

coherence is not simple. There is the coherence of speech, of argument, of facts, of an aesthetic whole; there is empirical coherence; there is logical coherence. What right have we for supposing that these differences can be obliterated? To pretend that they can, seems to ignore the fundamental distinction of truths of reason and truths of fact.

(iii) Further it fails altogether itself to yield an intelligible logic of inference. While insisting that the correspondence theory severs the linkage that relates truth to thought, supporters of the coherence theory end, as for instance Bosanquet in his *Implication and Linear Inference*, in offering an account of thinking that is as much a travesty of its reality as the same most seemingly extravagant statements of Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*.

I have deliberately said nothing about the difficulties connected with error; for these are perhaps more obvious and have been more canvassed. Yet for all these objections the coherence theory is of lasting importance, and this for two reasons. First, for its insistence on the necessity of taking thought seriously, and second, for its insistence on relativity. But before passing to that, we must digress for a moment to ask a question about what exactly it is that theories of truth are offering us. A theory of truth is perhaps a kind of map helping us to show the way in which the idea of truth, as it were, enters our experience to shape itself therein. Of course in a sense there is no such thing as truth in the sense in which there are caterpillars and Oedipus complexes. Nor indeed can we speak of truth as a category whose function one can define in a neo-Kantian manner. It is more elusive than that, and often one's attempts to capture it will drive one into the second-rate poetry philosophers are so often driven to pen. A theory of truth can only be judged successful by the extent to which it enables us to enter more intimately upon the way in which the threads of the idea are woven together in our experience.

Now when we say that the coherence theory compels us to take relativity seriously, what we mean is simply this. Although some of the changes brought against the correspondence theory may be unfair, it does always tend towards some kind of false absolutisation of the units of whose correspondence

it speaks. It deprives the individual judgment of its context, and argues that, so extracted, we can, as it were, take its measure. And of course very often this is quite legitimate, specially when simple statements like " the cat is on the mat " are concerned. But where other sorts of judgment are involved, the matter is not so simple. If we take something like the Darwinian hypothesis, the matter is a good deal more complicated. For one thing, what is the Darwinian hypothesis? When has one, so to speak, taken its measure? When one has traced its development and criticism by subsequent biologists? Perhaps; yet is that enough? It is the besetting sin even of these logicians who take seriously the actual development of man's investigation of his world to treat that process as if it were a kind of a spiritual activity shaping itself in accordance with its own immanent laws, unaffected by the pressure of social circumstance, maintaining loyalty to its own nature all the while.

But can we honestly see the development of even the most abstract science quite like this? Or if we do, must we not allow that we are looking at it from a peculiar point of view? Certainly we can allow that the logician must endeavour to frame a logic of discovery by entering, as it were, sympathetically, if not by way of first-hand participation, upon the development of scientific work. But how can he know that it is from that point of view that he sees the development as it really is? Or is that adverb question-begging?

The coherentists at their profoundest moments translated the ancient metaphysical antithesis of appearance and reality into one of the opposition of points of view. From what point of view do we see most clearly, without need of revision, what we are about? Of course this problem becomes most pressing where historical judgment is concerned. What is really happening in history? What are we saying when we say that Caesar crossed the Rubicon? And we ourselves—what are we about? When we say that our world is being split in two, what is the import of what we are saying? How can we, as it were, extract from the statement the personal emphasis that distorts and relativises the content of an assertion? If it was the achievement of Kant to see that objectivity at the level of perceptual judgment was something

which men had to win and not simply take for granted, it was the achievement of the coherentist to suggest the generalisation of that insight.

Unfortunately, their conception of the dialectic whereby objectivity was to be won was excessively simplified, partly because they were too completely the prisoners of their metaphysical idealism. Consciously or unconsciously, with the exception of Bradley, they accepted Hegel's doctrine of the sovereignty of the idea, and were thus enabled to avoid the full complexity of the problem they were compelled to face.

3. The Pragmatist Theory

Of the pragmatist theory, there is perhaps need to say comparatively little, except to point out that we are all of us pragmatists part of the time. The impulse to this theory would seem to have been twofold:

(i) The necessity of offering some kind of account of the status of the highly complex as well as abstract theories of the exact sciences. It may seem odd that the impulse towards pragmatism should have come partly from the attempt to evaluate the findings of exact science. But the suggestion, that the puzzles connected with the status of the unobservables of physics are best dissolved by assigning to them a conventional status, originates with Berkeley; and there is more than a hint in Hume himself that we can best get rid of our perplexities concerning inductive procedures by noting the indispensability and the fertility of the methods. We can easily see how the problem of the status and significance of the physical laws could have inclined men to a general doctrine identifying the true with the practically effective. It is certainly worth noting that these philosophers, who have refused to concede to pragmatism any worth as a general theory of truth, have none the less allowed that, where the solution or dissolution of the " problem of induction " is concerned, pragmatic consideration must have weight.

(ii) The parallel problem of the corrigibility of accepted beliefs. Whereas the coherentist finds in this corrigibility the sanction of his dialectic, the pragmatist finds it in justification for identifying the true with what seems " to serve its turn." The conception must admittedly be treated

elastically. There is no rigid model whereby serving its turn can be conceived, for as our purposes are multiple, so are our judgments.

. . .

Such then in outline are the main types of truth-theory. Even if with the contemporary verificationists we endeavour to approach the problem from the point of view of what constitutes valid methods for the establishment of different sorts of propositions, we will not, I suspect, escape the problems the more traditional discussions have raised.

Whatever our attitude towards a " Christian understanding of truth," we cannot escape the fact that the theologian is involved in the problem of truth. For he has to ask himself in what sense he claims truth for his own deliverances. The Christian believer too, reciting his creed, must ask himself in what sense he claims truth for what he is saying. Where the phrase " Crucified for us under Pontius Pilate " is concerned, he may presumably claim the sort of truth properly claimed for records of historical fact. And of course some theologians would insist that the statements relating to the processions within the Godhead are properly understood as pieces of ontological metaphysics, not of speculative metaphysics, but of that metaphysics which endeavours to lay bare the universal and pervasive structure of being. But there are other statements that perhaps do not so easily lend themselves to this treatment. For instance, He came down from Heaven. Of course we know that Heaven is not a place, and of course we know that God does not move as bodies move. Yet it is not quite loyal to the depths of Christian experience to evacuate that reference to descent in the statement, which is certainly eliminated if we construe the statement as such a theologian as Father E. L. Mascall would invite us to do.[1]

But what does loyalty to the depths of Christian experience mean here? What has that experience to do with what the proposition states and with what constitutes the sense of its truth? When we say that " It's true that He descended " what do we mean? Do we mean simply that we find it religiously helpful, as, for instance, some might find one prayer-

[1] Cf. *Christ, the Christian and the Church*, Longman's, 1946.

method against another? Surely not; for we dare to claim that what we are saying is unconditionally so. What then? Are we back in correspondence again? No, surely not, for can we measure what we are saying altogether out of relation to ourselves? Can we treat it simply as a bare statement of fact? If we are to gauge at all what we are saying, must we not take ourselves into the picture, as it were, experience in ourselves that shattering of our own universe that comes from the recognition that the Son of God has descended? Can we say we take this as true, except by so taking it as true that we allow, however imperfectly, that we are remade by it?

Now all this is admittedly obscure; partly with the obscurity of the unique. For faith is unique; it cannot be measured by anything outside itself. Yet at the level of faith the idea of truth is still with us. There is a truth of faith, an intellectual activity that issues from faith, and indeed a necessary expression of faith. Ultimately of course for the Christian, Christ is the truth, and to be in Christ is therefore to be in the truth, to be at that point of remaking, and of refashioning, and of return. But it is not such a truth as will permit a man to dwell in it as in a tent. That altogether conceals its intimacy and its authority, and at the same time, it ignores that in the moment when Christ spoke of himself as the truth, he also spoke of himself as the way, and the life. We cannot separate his character as way, truth and life; they are not separable attributes of his nature, but facets of his being for us.

In discussing the coherence theory of truth above, we commended it for its insistence on relativity and its recognition that for us objectivity, seeing things, as they were, was a problem; yet it was also insisted that the dialectic of the coherentists was insufficiently existential to be adequate to the problem they posed. The problem of supplying a more genuinely existential dialectic was, of course, attacked by Hegel's two greatest critics, Marx and Kierkegaard, whose influence to-day has quite eclipsed that of their master. The study of their opposition is one of the most important of contemporary intellectual duties. Perhaps no greater temptation besets the contemporary Christian thinker than that of embracing Kierkegaard's side in that dispute, because he is so astoundingly congenial. And yet the truth is not in him, but in

Christ. The final dialectic resides in the relation of the world to Him, the truly objective picture of the world is the picture of the world remade in Him.

It is tempting for the contemporary theologian to say that for the Christian truth is personal, that in effect factual truth such as concerns the scientist, lies, as it were, on the periphery of what need sincerely concern him, that the conflicts of human society after all only skirt the circumference of human life, that the real issues of human destiny are faced at a level where war, plague, pestilence, famine pass us by. This tremendous preoccupation with the personal has led in the writings of such thinkers as Gabriel Marcel to a really profound treatment of the problem of faith. The subtlety of the analysis to which human, spiritual engagement has been submitted will stand comparison with the classical Christian literature on the subject.

Yet if for the Christian the truth of the world is ultimately Christ, there is the peril here not simply of impoverishment of mind but of a deeper falsehood in this intense interiorisation. Because He is the way as well as the truth, we know that we are not in the truth when we have ceased to be conscious of our journey and deceive ourselves into supposing that we have arrived. If we measure our engagement ourselves and do not see that it is measured by the universal engagement of the second Adam, the " proper man," we are lost.

We could express that in another language by saying that for the Christian truth is eschatological. The idea comes to rest in the relation of the temporal to the eternal, a relation which for the Christian is constituted in Christ. The unity, the wholeness of which the coherentist speaks is for him a thing of promise; and because it is a thing of promise, the seeming opposition between the personal and the intelligible, on which Kierkegaard laid such stress, is in principle overcome.

The Christian is forced by the very nature of his faith to engage, at the level of faith, with the problem of the truth of it. And by this engagement he is inevitably compelled to take account of the philosophical debates that centre on the notion. Again and again he is tempted either to take sides or alternatively to offer his own theory as some kind of further option. And of course, because his concern springs from the

mystery of faith, this is just what he cannot do, any more than he can take sides. It is the ceaseless to and fro of the debate that is the significant thing. The coherentist, of course, sees this; yet no more than the Marxist who succeeds him, can he bear the burden of seeing validity always as a problem, never as something possessed. He will not acknowledge the incompleteness of his own statement. It is here that Christianity by its understanding of truth won through engagement with the question of the nature of the truth of faith, dares to suggest that perhaps after all this experience of validity as something hardly won is part and parcel of the burden of being human, that burden which only faith, the proper consummation, as it is the restoration of our blinded mind, can make bearable.

(*To be concluded*)

THE EXPOSITION OF HOLY SCRIPTURE[1]

by The Rev. G. S. HENDRY, B.D.

There is an old custom which is to be observed in all proper churches: at the beginning of public worship the Bible is solemnly carried in and laid upon the pulpit—and then the minister follows. This is the right order of precedence; for the minister, as his name indicates, is but the servant, *minister verbi divini;* and it is fitting that the servant should follow the master. Further, to make his servitude more evident, the minister wears a livery. It is true, he may be a master of his servile craft, he may be called a doctor, and he may take it upon himself to wear the appropriate badges of proficiency. But his position remains essentially that of a servant whose office it is to attend upon his master, to make way for him, to do his behests.

This little bit of familiar ceremony enshrines essential truth, and it may well form the starting-point of our consideration of the scope and function of the ministry of the Word of God. It will accord with the ceremonial order of precedence if we begin with the second of these two terms,

[1] Lee Memorial Lecture in St. Giles' Cathedral, Edinburgh, 26th May, 1946.

the word; for, as the ministry is a *ministerium* (service), the *magisterium* (mastery) belongs to the Word of God.

What then is the Word of God? It will be noticed that in what I have said I have been begging the question. In the little ceremony I have referred to, what is carried into the pulpit before the minister is in actual fact a book, a book of written words, and what the minister actually does is to read from these written words, these Scriptures, and to expound some portion of them. Are these Scriptures identical with the Word of God, and is the exposition of them equivalent to the ministry of the Word of God, or precisely what is the relation between them?

The Bible is often called the Word of God—it is so called by the minister when he reads a portion of it in the pulpit or at the reading-desk; but this may be intended to mean only that there is some kind of connection or relation between the two entities, and not necessarily that they are identical and interchangeable. It is common knowledge that a great change has taken place in the interpretation of this relationship within the last two or three generations. From the seventeenth century until the latter half of the nineteenth century, roughly speaking, the proposition that the Bible is the Word of God was taken in a strict, literal sense as indicating a relation of direct and complete identity between them. The Bible was regarded as all but a divine holograph, the human writers, whose part in the affair could not be entirely ruled out, being relegated to the rôle of amanuenses or passive instruments in the hands of the divine author.

Looking back from the eminence to which our superior enlightenment has exalted us, we are sometimes disposed to smile contemptuously at the crudity of this mechanical, plenary, verbal theory of inspiration, as it is variously called, and to marvel at the ignorance and obscurantism of those who held it. Yet the tenacity with which it was held for so long by men of great piety and learning, and the reluctance to abandon it even to-day in some quarters, should warn us not to be too hasty in our judgment. It may be that there was more in this theory than meets the eye, that it was some vital and profound truth behind it which its advocates were concerned to maintain, and that if we could disentangle this

truth from the theory in which they dressed it out, we may find something of deep and permanent validity.

However that may be, the mechanical theory of inspiration itself has gone by the board. Intellectual honesty now makes it impossible to believe in such a miracle of the suspension of the human faculties and frailties of the writers of Scripture, such an immaculate conception of their literary activity, as the mechanical theory posited. It is the great and abiding merit of modern critical scholarship that it has rediscovered the human character of the Bible. Patient, honest, and not irreverent study of the Bible itself has shown that it is a collection of documents which were written and compiled by fallible men, and which reflect in a thousand ways the characteristics and circumstances of their authors and the conditions of their times.

In the light of this knowledge of the human character of the Bible which modern critical scholarship has established, it is plain that the old view of a direct identity between the Bible and the Word of God is no longer tenable. What are we to put in its place? This is the problem with which theology has been wrestling for over half a century, and of which, I believe, it is only now coming within sight of the solution.

Two main lines have been followed in the effort to achieve a solution of the problem since the advent of modern criticism. The first was to substitute a partial for a complete identity between the Bible and the Word of God, *i.e.*, instead of saying, The Bible is the Word of God, it was proposed to say, The Bible contains the Word of God. This expression, or rather the inverted form of it, The Word of God contained in the Bible, actually occurs in some of the formularies of our Church, where it is employed simply to define the extent of the Canon. But it is an ambiguous term, and there is no doubt that it was hailed by many who took it in the other sense and used it as a warrant for Biblical eclecticism. The Word of God was indeed contained in the Bible, but together with a great deal of extraneous matter which formed, so to speak, the outer husk. The Bible contains history, geography, cosmology, psychology, myths and legends and other things of the same kind; these are the words of fallible men. It is only

when the Bible speaks of God and His will for men that it is the Word of God. Thus the divine authority of the Bible was defined in a way closely resembling the infallibility of the Pope—it pertained only to its pronouncements on "faith and morals." This made it necessary to set up a canon within the Canon, by the discrimination of various strata within the Bible and the selection of certain more or less clearly stated preferences. The appeal to the Bible nowadays is generally made under the guidance of some such principle of selection; the N.T., for instance, is generally preferred to the O.T., and within the N.T. the Gospels are given preference over the Pauline Epistles. There is to-day a marked tendency to accord to the words of Jesus recorded in the Synoptic Gospels an authority superior to anything else in the N.T., if not an exclusive authority, while in some quarters on the outer fringe of Christendom the Sermon on the Mount is often spoken of as if it were the sum-total of Christianity. But the most general feature of this Biblical eclecticism is the disparagement of the O.T. It is significant that where the O.T. has not been repudiated altogether, the custom is now to speak of its value rather than of its authority, its value conceived as historical, preparatory, propaedeutic.

Now there is no doubt that this eclecticism rests upon a true perception of the centrality of Jesus Christ in the Bible and represents a sound reaction from the old literalist view which treated the Bible as a heterogeneous compendium of legal texts, all equally and directly authoritative, and which failed to see the wood for the trees. Nevertheless, when we take it upon ourselves to extract an inner kernel from an outer husk of Scripture, and to regard that alone as the Word of God, it is well to be aware of what we are doing. Four things are to be considered:

(i) We are implicitly revising the historic judgment of the Church regarding the Canon. There is no reason why we should not do that. As we shall see more clearly later, the definition of the Canon was a confession of faith on the part of the Church; and thus it cannot claim finality. In principle the question of the Canon must remain open. But the Scriptures were committed to the Church, and any revision of their extent could properly be carried out only by a

judgment which was in effect or in intention a confession of faith by the Church, and not merely a private interpretation or a personal preference.

(ii) Assuming that the Church were prepared to reopen the question, any modification of the Canon in the direction indicated, *i.e.*, a reduction of it to the N.T. or to the Gospels or to the words of Jesus would encounter very grave difficulties. It could only be undertaken on the assumption that we understand Scripture better than it understands itself—a dangerous assumption to make in the interpretation of any written record. Is there any part, even of the central core of Scripture that we could isolate from the rest without the necessity of imposing a new interpretation upon it? Certainly not the Sermon on the Mount or any of the words of Jesus. The attempts to treat the teaching of Jesus as a text without a context, *i.e.*, to disregard Jesus Himself, and His context in the prophetic and apostolic witness, have been a major source of havoc and confusion in the Church. The fact is that the N.T. understands itself simply as the definitive exposition of the O.T.; for "the Scriptures" referred to by Jesus and the apostles are in fact the canonical books of the O.T. If the text is abandoned, it is difficult to see how the commentary can stand alone.

(iii) It is further to be observed that if the Word of God is identified directly with a kernel of Scripture, it follows that when once we have extracted this kernel, we do not require Scripture any more. When we have got Jonah out of the whale's belly, we have no further use for the whale. If Scripture is a text book from which we have to learn certain general religious truths and principles, then, when we have learned these, we can dispense with the text book. This inference is the real ground of the Roman attitude to Scripture; and it is significant that it was first drawn by Augustine. "The man who is firmly grounded in faith, hope and charity," he wrote, "needs the Scriptures only for the purpose of instructing others" (*De doctrina christiana*, 1.39). The plain truth is that if all we can gather from Scripture is certain general ideas about God and life and destiny, we can get much better books than Scripture from which to gather them.

(iv) But the chief objection to this proposed solution of

the problem of the relation of the Word of God to Scripture is the assumption that the Word of God is so delivered to us in the kernel of Scripture that we can take it in our hands and apply it as a criterion to Scripture itself. This is a theological assumption which conflicts with Scripture's own testimony concerning itself; for Scripture does not identify itself directly with the Word of God. Scripture consists of the words of men, even when these are the words of Jesus of Nazareth. The Word of God is God Himself speaking, *Dei loquentis persona*, as Calvin put it (*Inst.* 1.7.4), and that plainly is a different thing from any written record.

The second suggested solution of the problem is really not different from the first; it only carries it to its logical conclusion. Here the term "Word of God," if it is employed at all, is no more than a metaphor; it is divested of real meaning. It is, of course, the application of modern critical methods to the study of the Bible that has led many to this view of it as a record of a human quest for God and a groping after God which is superlative in degree but not fundamentally different in kind from that recorded in the books of the historical world-religions. The Bible then is the writings of those men who have advanced furthest in the religious quest or who have climbed nearest the summit of the lofty and inaccessible peak of religious knowledge; these writings contain the best, the sublimest words men have ever uttered about God; but it is only by a metaphor that they can be called the Word of God. It is not denied that the men of the Bible did achieve an apprehension of God or that their experience was an experience of reality. Only, the accent is laid on the experience, not on the reality experienced, for that is assumed to be there all the time and in principle accessible to all alike. It is the experience that is distinguished by the depth of its penetration into reality. Just as Newton penetrated further than any of his predecessors into the secrets of nature, which were there all the time and only waiting to be discovered, so the men of the Bible penetrated further than any others into the mystery of God; but it was their own genius that enabled them; for as Newton was a genius of science, so the men of the Bible, on this view (the liberal view, it is generally called) are to be regarded as the geniuses of religion. "The

Old and New Testaments," writes Dr. Matthews, an eminent representative of theological liberalism, " can claim a place of supreme importance among the data of our thought just because they contain the record of a religious experience unique in its continuity and its sustained elevation " (*God in Christian Thought and Experience*, p. 114).

The relation of the Bible to the Word of God, on this view, might then be described as *proxime accessit:* it is first in the class, but it is in the same class as the Sacred Books of the East and of the West. The consequence leaps to the eye: if the Bible is only *proxime accessit* to the Word of God, there is always the possibility of *propius accedere*. Newton penetrated further into the secrets of nature than any before him, but Einstein penetrated yet further. And who is to say that some religious genius will not arise and penetrate more deeply into the mystery of God? Theological liberalism relativises the authority of the Bible; it gives it the most honourable place on the shelf among the sacred books of the west, but it deprives it of its unique distinction as *holy* scripture. And finally, the liberal view certainly makes it preposterous for the Bible to take precedence of the minister in the entry into church; for he is the master and judge. The Bible, as Dr. Matthews ingenuously puts it, has claimed a place of supreme importance among the data of his thought—and, as the Bible itself says, a living dog is better than a dead lion.

It has been suggested that the best answer to this kind of thought is to laugh in its face. And when one examines the foundations of liberalism, its presuppositions and prejudices, its pretensions and its hesitations, its peculiar assurances and its no less peculiar doubts, it does present an odd spectacle. I daresay it would be possible for a clever man to read the Bible upside-down through the wrong end of a telescope, but it would be permissible for the merest schoolboy to point out to him that there is an easier and better way of reading it. And so I think the answer to the liberal view of the Bible is best given by the Bible itself, which can only be fitted into the framework of the liberal view after being mutilated and turned upside-down and having its own clear and distinctive testimony concerning itself struck out. For the testimony of the men of the Bible is that the reality they experienced

actively and authoritatively disclosed itself to them, or rather (for they did not employ such jargon) that God spoke His word to them, that having of old time spoken unto the fathers by the prophets by diverse portions and in diverse manners, at the end of the days He spoke in His Son, and that this, His Word, is final and decisive for all the race of men. If liberalism is right in its view that these men were only expressing their partial and relative apprehension of the ultimate, then they were fundamentally wrong about themselves; and it is difficult to see how anything that proceeds from such a fundamental error can be of value for us.

What then is the Word of God, and what is its relation to the Bible? The knowledge of the human character and composition of the Bible which literary and historical criticism has given us has made it impossible for us to accept the old view of a direct, verbal identity between the Word of God and the Bible. But on the other hand we are unable to acquiesce in the liberal interpretation which exalts the human words of the Bible about God as pre-eminent but leaves no place for a word of God as a word from God and by God. Each of these is wrong in itself. Nevertheless, each is relatively right over against the other. Liberalism is right as against verbalism in insisting that the knowledge which modern critical scholarship has given us must be taken into account, and that any belief in the Bible as the Word of God which closes its eyes to its unmistakable human character is incompatible with intellectual honesty. But on the other hand verbalism was right as against liberalism in its insistence that the Word of God is present in the Bible and indeed inseparable from the Bible, though it was in error in conceiving its presence in a static and material way. There is an answer which does justice to the element of truth in each view and at the same time avoids the errors of both: it is the answer given by the Reformers and enshrined in the oldest Reformed Confessions. The Bible is the Word of God, but it is the Word of God only by the inspiration of God, not by virtue of any property inherent in itself. In itself the Bible consists of human words, which like all such are subject to error. Like all human words, however, they have their significance, not in themselves, but in that which they signify, in the object to which

they point; and they can only be interpreted aright by reference to this object. But it is peculiar to the object to which the human words of the Bible bear witness that it is not open to independent verification; it can only verify itself. For it is the Word of God, the word that God has spoken and speaks and will speak; and we have no standard by means of which we can verify or prove it. What we can verify and prove is *ipso facto* not the Word of God. God proves His own word to faith, and faith testifies to it, but it does not prove. This is what Calvin meant when he said that the Word of God is αὐτόπιστος, self-authenticating (*Inst.* 1.7.5). And when it authenticates itself, it authenticates also the testimony which is borne to it in Scripture; for that is the testimony of those who were the chosen witnesses of its original revelation. Thus it may be said that Scripture is the form, the human form in which the word of God comes to us; but the informing of it with its divine content is in the power of God alone. In other words, the word of God is the object of Scripture only in that it is the subject of Scripture. Professor Clavier has expressed it thus: "The manner in which the word is contained in Scripture must not be envisaged statically as a material content, but as a spiritual charge . . . The Word and the Scripture are united in such a way that they constitute an organic unity; they are to each other as the soul to the body, inseparable one from the other" (*Die Kirche Jesu Christi und das Wort Gottes*, p. 72). But in fact no analogy drawn from the realm of our experience is adequate to express the relation of the Word of God to the Bible; that relation is unique, *sui generis;* its only parallel is the relation of the divine and human natures in the person of Jesus Christ, who is the Word incarnate.

2

It may elucidate this brief and imperfect sketch of the Reformed doctrine of the Word of God, which I have attempted to give, if we now proceed to consider what it implies regarding the ministry of the word. The first thing we note is that it seems to make the notion of a ministry of the word impossible; for if God alone is able to speak His word, what place can there be for human ministrations, what service can we render to the word which is not a disservice?

It is this difficulty which lies at the bottom of that uncomfortable feeling of impotence and frustration which comes over every minister from time to time when he reflects upon the success of his preaching. What minister is there who has not been visited by the uneasy sense that he has failed to attain the object at which his preaching aimed, that even his best considered and most carefully prepared and most impressively delivered sermon has somehow fallen short, that something, the real subject of all his words has eluded his best efforts to express it in words? He has been engaged in an endeavour to paint the bird on the wing, and however deftly he draw, however he mix his colours, always one thing will be lacking, the essential thing, the life, the movement, the flight. I have been told that the Gaelic word for the swallow embodies a graphic description of its flight which, to those who know the language, makes it appear the inevitable word.[1] Yet, if one had never seen a swallow on the wing, could any word, however framed, convey to him the peculiar grace of its swift, darting flight? So the words of the preacher, however well chosen, however cleverly arranged, however eloquently spoken, fall short of their object; for they are, in the last resort, attempts to express what no words of man can express, the authentic Word of God which is living and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword. He who undertakes the exposition of the Word of God, confident of his ability to do it, will surely fail. If we are to have hope of success, the first condition, paradoxically, is the recognition that we have set our hands to a task which is humanly impossible.

It is thus that Paul viewed his apostolic ministry. With all his burning zeal to declare the testimony of God he combined a profound consciousness of his own impotence to make his testimony effective to evoke the thing testified. "I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling," he writes to the Corinthians (1 *Corinthians* 2.3), and he makes repeated reference to his "infirmities." Dr. T. R. Glover has suggested in a recent essay that Paul's diffidence was due to his fear that his Cilician accent would provoke mirth among the citizens of Corinth and Athens. Such an idea could

[1] A Gaelic scholar to whom I appealed was unable to confirm this, and it appears that I was misinformed. But the point stands, and the reader can supply some other example.

surely have been thought of only at Oxford or Cambridge; and even psychologically it is hardly credible; for a man who is ashamed of his accent does not usually display the fact, and it is difficult to imagine a man like Paul being troubled about such a thing. Paul knew that all human accents, whether of Attica or even of Oxford are unable to bear effective testimony to God's word, unless God Himself endorse it by His Spirit and power.

The Scriptural principle of the Reformed Church reflects this sense of impotence and humility which was felt by the great Reformers, notably Calvin. Calvin, we know, was masterful, dogmatic, intolerant, and all the rest of the evil things which are spoken against him, not altogether falsely. Yet at the same time there was at the core of his mind a profound humility—I mean his mind in regard to his principal task, the service of the Word of God. None has expressed more clearly and emphatically than he the truth that God alone can speak His own word, and that His word cannot be hard even in Scripture, unless it be accompanied by the witness of His Spirit: "As God alone is a sufficient witness of Himself in His own word, so also the word will never win credit in the hearts of men, till it be confirmed by the inward testimony of the Spirit. It is necessary therefore that the same Spirit who spoke by the mouths of the prophets, should penetrate into our hearts . . . The Scripture obtains the credit which it deserves with us by the testimony of the Spirit. For though it wins our reverence by its internal majesty, it never seriously affects us till it be confirmed by the Spirit in our hearts" (*Inst.* 1.7.4f). A close paraphrase of these words is contained in the opening chapter of the Westminster Confession. The Reformed doctrine of the inspiration of Scripture is not, as it later came to be misunderstood, a doctrine of the inspiredness of Scripture as a quality inherent in itself (the shadow of this misunderstanding falls very plainly across the Westminster Confession); it is a doctrine of the necessity of inspiration, of in-Spiriting, if the Scripture is to be expounded and received as the Word of God. The Shorter Catechism makes this very plain when it asks, "How is the word made effectual to salvation?" and answers, "The Spirit of God maketh the reading, but especially, the preaching of the word

an effectual means of convincing and converting sinners, and of building them up in holiness and comfort through faith unto salvation." And the sole competence of the Spirit to expound the word is further attested in the following answer where, in order that the Spirit may do His work in the word, we are counselled to "attend thereunto with diligence, preparation and prayer." Similar statements are to be found again and again in the Directory. The doctrine of the inspiration of Scripture means simply, as Barth has put it, that the door of the Bible can be opened only from within: to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

This then is the first principle—and it is also the last—which we must bear in mind when we set our hands to the exposition of holy Scripture. We have to recognise the sole competence and the sovereign freedom of the Spirit. But within these brackets, as it were, we have our peculiar service to discharge; for we are not left to make our appeal for the Spirit in a vacuum; the promise of the Spirit is attached to the word. This is the door at which we have to knock; our appeal for the Spirit has to be made in the word, and it consists in fact in exposition of the word. It is not just a pious gesture. Here *laborare est orare*. As the Catechism says, we must attend to the word with diligence and preparation as well as prayer; but it must be such a *laborare* as is suffused with and issues in prayer, *orare*.

Thus our exposition of the word, the *ministerium verbi* must be understood as standing in a kind of sacramental relation to the *magisterium verbi*, the demonstration of the Spirit. It is a man who speaks, but he speaks in the faith that it may please God to employ the material of his speaking in order Himself to speak. For that is the sole justification of preaching, that God Himself should speak; as the Second Helvetic Confession boldly puts it, *Praedicatio verbi Dei est verbum Dei*, the preaching of the Word of God is the Word of God. Of course, it is not we who have the power to prove this equation; its proof remains always in God's hand. But if we do not proceed in the faith of it, then is our preaching vain. What we can do, and what we must do, is to obey the rule of faith.

There are many rules which have been set up to guide those who are called to the ministry of the word in the execu-

tion of their task. There are technical rules, such as have been treated in some of the series of Warrack Lectures, and to which we do well to pay heed. But my concern here is rather with the theological rules, *i.e.*, the rules which apply to preaching, not merely as rhetoric but as ministry of the Word of God. These all derive from one fundamental rule, the Canon or rule of faith.

What is the Canon? The term is always understood now as the line which defines the extent of holy Scripture, the line which separates the books which are authoritative from others which are variously regarded as only instructive or apocryphal or heretical. But it is well known that this apparently formal application of the word, which has been general since the fourth century, is not original. It was first employed in the language of the Church in the sense of " the formulated confession of the Christian faith, especially the baptismal creed " (Souter: *Text and Canon of the N.T.*, p. 154), and the question has often been asked how it passed from the one sense to the other. It is a very long and difficult story, with gaps and obscurities which cannot be cleared up. But, as is the way with such stories, the last page is often found to be most illuminating. The latest page to be written in this story was when the Churches of the Reformation solemnly re-affirmed the Canon of Scripture as the Word of God and thereby recovered the positive significance which unites both the historical applications of the term. The Canon is the rule or line which marks off the area in which faith comes into being and which it occupies, the area in which it hears the word of God. The definition of the Canon is itself a confession of faith; it is in fact the church's original and primary confession of faith, to which all its subsequent confessions are secondary and subordinate. It is the transmission of the Canon in this positive sense from faith to faith throughout the generations that constitutes the true apostolic succession.[1]

[1] Some of Harnack's observations on the Canon in his History of Dogma are suggestive in this connection. Augustine's oscillation between Scripture and Rule of faith in the treatise *de doctrina christiana*, which he points out, arises from the fact that the two things were really identical for Augustine. Harnack finds it very striking (*höchst auffallend*) that no one at this time enquired how the Canon came to be set up. But is it very striking that a man should not spend much time in, say, the first four months of his marriage in enquiring how he came to marry his wife and whether he might not have chosen another? See *Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte*, 2, p. 82f.

In its application to the preacher the Canon as the rule of faith signifies that it is his task to expound the canonical Scriptures, *i.e.*, to be precise, the books included in the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. The Canon indicates the sphere which he has to occupy or the ground which he has to cover. Few, of course, will be able to carry this out literally and emulate the example of Calvin who expounded the entire Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, omitting only Revelation and 2 and 3 John, as is well known. But the canonical Scripture in its entirety must be the preacher's frame or sphere of reference. He is at fault if he deliberately neglects certain parts of Scripture. The arbitrary setting-up of a canon within the Canon is a breach of the rule, and a notorious source of false doctrine, while the widespread modern practice of using the Bible as a thesaurus of mottoes on which to hang a series of what Kierkegaard called reflections is a complete negation of it. Whatever our personal preferences may be, and we all have our personal preferences, we have no right to set them up as a criterion. Our commission is to declare all the counsel of God, and the rule is consecutive exposition of Holy Scripture. The Canon is the church's confession of faith that the thoughts of the Bible are better and more important than our thoughts; patiently to re-think them is the task of exposition.

The rule may be expressed in another way which may be more immediately practical. The actual subject of exposition in any given case will be a selected text or passage of Scripture. In the exposition of the text the preacher must have regard to the unity of Scripture. Of course there is great variety in Scripture, but it is variety in unity. We may think here of the literal and original meaning of the Greek word, Canon, as a staff or rod. It must be applied to the individual text like a ruler to indicate the line in which it lies, and along which its interpretation is to be sought. Or better, we may think of the Canon as the baton in the hand of the unseen conductor who brings the whole orchestra of Scripture into play. The individual instruments of Scripture, even when they play solo, are only rightly heard when they are heard as harmonious components of a symphony. This is the real sense of the principle set down in the Confession and in the Directory,

that Scripture is to be interpreted by Scripture. It does not mean merely that individual texts are to be compared. It means, as the Confession rightly interprets it, that the final norm is the Holy Spirit speaking in the Scripture. For the unity of Scripture is not that of logical consistency, inherent in the text and capable of being presented in the form of a Scriptural systematic. It is rather a unity of direction or perspective, because the unifying centre of Scripture is outside of Scripture itself; it stands at " the vanishing-point of the Biblical perspectives." The conductor of this orchestra, upon whom the eyes of all the players are fixed, is hidden from our view; he is not seated in the orchestra and himself plays no instrument in it. But it is under his direction that it plays a symphony and not a conglomerate of discordant tunes.

This can be stated in a more concrete form. Scripture itself makes it plain in what direction its centre lies; for its lines converge unmistakably upon Jesus Christ. There are two sayings of Luther's which are often quoted here: *Christus dominus et rex Scripturae*, Christ is the Lord and King of Scripture, and the other, more picturesque: The Bible is the cradle in which Christ lies. The Bible is Christo-centric, and it has to be interpreted Christologically, as the word which proclaims Christ. Yet, Christ is not present in the Scripture in the same way as the baby in the cradle; for the baby can be taken out of the cradle and the cradle discarded. Scripture could conceivably contain the man Jesus of Nazareth, though N.T. scholars are finding it increasingly difficult to extract from it anything like a biography of the Jesus of history. The Scripture belongs to the realm of flesh and blood, and flesh and blood cannot reveal that Jesus is the Christ: " no man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost " (1 *Corinthians* 12.3). Scripture points beyond itself, and in order to see where it points we require to listen to its testimony in its entirety and to look along all its perspectives.

It is a good augury that N.T. scholars today are showing a growing tendency to speak of the unity of the N.T.; and an instructive book bearing this title has lately been published by one of our own Scottish workers in this field. Let us hope that the legend of Paul as the arch-fiend who overlaid the simple Galilean gospel and the ethics of the Sermon on

the Mount with a coat of offensive and irrelevant dogma has been finally exposed. But a more important feature of contemporary Biblical scholarship is the emergence of a new concern for the Christological interpretation of the O.T. Little has been heard of it in this country as yet, but notable pioneering work has been going on on the Continent for several years, and when the work of Wilhelm Vischer, the Swiss scholar who has made the boldest advance thus far, is made available in English, as I understand it will shortly be, I shall not be surprised if it is thought that a second Wellhausen has arisen to "reverse the inversion" associated with the name of the first. I hasten to add that there is no thought of repudiating Wellhausen or denying the great illumination which the critical method of study has brought to the understanding of Scripture. We cannot go back to the pre-critical stage. But the need to-day is to go forward beyond criticism to that task of interpretation which criticism left untouched, because it never saw it. The error of criticism is not that it was too critical, but that it was not critical enough of its own assumptions. Criticism was dominated by the assumption that the elucidation of the historical sense is the supreme object, and the only scientific object of Bible study. The Bible was treated as a source book, and the whole apparatus of critical study, the literary analysis of the documents, the investigation of the sources and the tracing of the parallels, was assiduously employed with the object of determining what actually happened. All this has a value and importance of its own, but plainly it can yield no more than what Luther called a *fides historica*, as he saw it in the Roman Church of his day. And it is a question whether it can be made to yield even that without a great deal of suppression and mutilation, whether the history of what actually happened behind the Biblical records is history of a kind that can be interpreted in the ordinary categories of historical study, whether, as G. K. Chesterton epigrammatically put it, the honest attempt to read the Bible as an ordinary book will not lead to the discovery that it is a very extraordinary book, whether indeed the critical approach to the Bible is not in the last analysis an attempt to play Hamlet without the Prince of Denmark.

The assumption that the historical sense of Scripture is

the true sense and that the elucidation of it is the only scientific interpretation of Scripture is, in fact an assumption derived from the prevailing philosophy of the era in which Biblical criticism began to flourish. The suspicion of an assumed superiority which the name " higher criticism " aroused in the minds of those who were ignorant of its technical connotation, was not entirely without foundation; for the higher criticism was a product of that optimism which was so broadly characteristic of the century that lies behind us and which the present century has shown to be so ill-founded—the intellectual optimism with which men assumed their ability to translate and understand the literature of even the remotest peoples and cultures and to " explain " them with the aid of neat, rational categories. The matter has been found to be not quite so easy as it was supposed, least of all in regard to the Bible. To understand the Bible, it has been said, it is nowhere more necessary to remember that *understanding*, as the peculiar form and derivation of the word itself indicate, is not a matter of thought only, but something that belongs to the relations between living beings.

To-day there is a marked change of temper. Within the last quarter of a century something like a silent revolution has been taking place in the realm of critical scholarship. Criticism has become self-critical and is approaching the task of Biblical interpretation with a humility altogether different from the characteristic mood of last century. Something like a crisis of criticism had already begun to make itself felt in the closing years of last century when the most radical N.T. criticism reached the conclusion that there lies behind the documents a mysterious, unknown quantity, a more-than-historical somewhat, which criticism could neither explain nor explain away. In the last decades of this present century the pursuit of this elusive *x* led criticism (in the shape of *Formgeschichte* or Form criticism) to the astonishing discovery that the Bible is a theological book and can only be theologically understood. It is significant that in the years immediately preceding the war the leading forces of critical scholarship in Germany had been mustered for the production of a Theological Lexicon of the N.T., in which the object was not merely to trace the historical and literary antecedents of the words, but

to discover their import and intention in the context of the Christian *kerygma*.

Thus the gulf which so long separated the academic from the practical-ecclesiastical use of Scripture has begun to close, and criticism is now furnishing direct aid to the preacher in his task of expounding the Scripture as the Word of God; for Scripture is the Word of God. This is its meaning, and apart from this it is meaningless. The fragment of history recorded in Scripture (and it is real, historical history) has its sole significance in the fact that it is chosen by God as the vehicle or material through which He speaks His living word to us.

It is impossible then to resist the conclusion that the exposition of Holy Scripture must be allegorical; for its aim is not the elucidation of what actually happened long ago when Israel came out of Egypt or when the apostles gazed into the empty tomb, but the endeavour to find what the Spirit is saying to the Church in and through these words. I am well aware that a plea for allegorical interpretation will sound strange in this enlightened age. The term has acquired an evil odour. But it is the old story, " Give a dog a bad name." I submit that all public exposition of Scripture is in fact, if not in name, allegorical, for allegorical means simply saying other things, and I have never yet listened to an exposition of any text of Scripture in which the text was not invoked to say other things, and sometimes very other things indeed, from the plain literal sense of the words. It is, of course, the allegorical interpretation of the medieval preachers that brought the term into disrepute. But the fault was not that their interpretation was allegorical; it was, as Luther saw, that it was employed according to a system; they knew in advance what the text was going to say, because the Church set itself up as the authoritative expositor of Scripture and possessed the key to its meaning, which could be applied mechanically. But when we understand that the authoritative expositor of Scripture is the Spirit in the word, the invocation of the Spirit coupled with genuine listening to the word, must needs issue in a kind of allegorical exegesis as a venture of faith. I know this is dangerous. But then all interpretation of Scripture is dangerous. And the danger of the Spiritual interpretation of Scripture is all too often avoided only by

running into the worse danger of interpreting it according to the spirit of the age.

It is only in the faith of the promise of the Spirit in the word that the ministry is possible. The faithful exposition of Holy Scripture, faithful not only to the standards of critical science, but faithful to the promise of Him who is the Subject of Scripture, is the ministry of the Word of God, and, by God's grace, it is the Word of God.

I conclude with a characteristic word of Luther's: "At the last day God will say to me, Did you preach that? And I shall say, Yes. Likewise God will say to you, Did you hear that? And you will answer, Yes. And when He says further, Why then did you not believe it? you will say, Oh, I took it for a human word that a poor chaplain or a country-parson had spoken. Then that same word, which sticks in your heart, will be your accuser and judge at the last day; for it is God's word, it is God Himself you heard, as Christ says, He that heareth you, heareth me" (W.A. 47, 120, cited by Barth, *Kirchliche Dogmatik*, 1.1.98).

THE DOCTRINE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

by The Rev. Professor G. JOHNSTON, B.D., Ph.D.

1. The Nature of the Holy Spirit

I

When the atomic bomb was dropped at Bikini Atoll in operation Crossroads, water on the surface of the sea rushed out from the centre of the waterspout at a speed greater than sound. Many of us will find this an apt symbol of a world that seems to be rushing headlong to disaster because men are in danger of putting the creative energies of the Lord God to evil uses; physical energy in such weapons; biological energy in the depersonalising of women and workers and citizens; and what we can only call spiritual energy in the fields of culture and political societies. The question is how we are to be enabled to reverse this process; and here

the doctrine of the Spirit as holy, transcendent power ought to be relevant. It has been rightly suggested that this may be indeed " the back of the whole contribution of Christian thought to the cultural problem of our time." One outstanding difficulty in the way of an apologetic statement of our faith is the bias provoked at least among some sections by the scientific outlook. Indeed F. W. Dillistone goes so far as to write (*The Holy Spirit in the Life of to-day*, p.105) the scientist " is tireless in his search for ' truth,' but again it is ' truth ' which is contained within his own system. He insists, in other words, that ' truth ' which cannot be apprehended by scientific methods has no real claim to the name but belongs to the realm of phantasy or wishful thinking. And surely Jesus would have cried to this generation that unless our ' truth ' exceeds or transcends that of the scientist we cannot hope to see the vision of those higher realities which belong to the Kingdom of God."

But as soon as you say this you come up against the uncomfortable fact that average Church Life in the West seems itself to have little really practical experience of such spiritual power. Here is a voice from Scotland: " In Acts 19 there were twelve men who had not so much as heard that there was such a thing as the Holy Spirit . . . Those twelve men at Ephesus bear an unpleasant resemblance to our Church Life in Scotland at present . . . Do we not lead (our young communicants) to believe that now they are admitted to the Sacrament as pledged disciples of Jesus Christ there is no Pentecost for them to pray for and long earnestly to reach? . . . We all need a fresh baptism of the Holy Spirit till once more we attempt great things for God, and rise above the limitations of the humanly possible into the miraculous world of forgiveness and prevailing prayer and apostolic power " (W. R. Forrester, *Conversion* 6.14.28). Here is a voice from England, building on the same passage in Acts: magical powers bestowed on the hierarchy and available through an appropriate ritual sum up the popular notion of the Spirit. " Doves, flames, seven-fold gifts which no one has ever classified intelligibly, gifts bestowed by episcopal hands—what sort of teaching does our Church give to interpret this medley of symbols? " Yet this " is in some sense the very keystone

of the arch of doctrine that binds together all the rest into a solid structure . . . the doctrine is essential. We have mislaid and neglected it. We must repent." (C. E. Raven, *Good News of God*, 107f.).

Even if we should want to say that the doctrine of the Church must in this age be the centre of theological debate, we should still be up against the Scriptural facts which form the basis for all construction of this article, and especially this, that for the N.T. the Church is the community of the Holy Spirit. Pentecost is the birthday of the Church as an actuality in history.

II

When you come to consider what the N.T. faith is under this aspect, you cannot fail to be impressed with the range of teaching. It has antecedents of course in the O.T. thought of the creating Spirit; in Joel's great prophecy; in the Servant Songs of Isaiah; and in Ezekiel. The emphasis there is on " the power of God in and through the lives of men " (Snaith, *Headingley Lectures*, 31), bringing life and prophetic inspiration. But N.T. doctrine is founded chiefly on the great new fact of Jesus and on the baptism of believers with a power which brought them into communion with God and with one another in love and growing righteousness.

At first sight it will appear remarkable that in the Synoptic record of his teaching Jesus says very little about the Spirit. I shall not weary you with detailed analysis. There are only three or four savings that need detain us:

(1) *Matthew* 12.28: " But if I by the Spirit of God cast out devils, then is the Kingdom of God come upon you." In *Luke* the reading is " by the finger of God " (11.20), an allusion probably to *Exodus* 8.15. Most commentators agree that " finger " is the original reading and that it may be the authentic word of Jesus. But I believe a case could be made out for regarding the reference to the Spirit as genuine.

(2) and (3) are in *Mark* 3.29 and 8.11: " But whosoever shall blaspheme against the Holy Spirit hath never forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin."

Jesus is aware (as the Baptism experience shows) that He is endowed with the Spirit for His Messianic work. He is virtually asserting the divinity of the Spirit.

"And when they lead you to judgment, and deliver you up, be not anxious beforehand what ye shall speak; but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye; for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Spirit."

Luke has " a mouth and wisdom," but perhaps the scales are tipped in favour of the reference to the Spirit by the consideration that the Fourth Gospel's wealth of teaching becomes " more intelligible if some traditions of Jesus' teaching on the subject were current in the Church."

(4) *Luke* 4.18: " To-day hath the Scripture of *Isaiah* 61.1f been fulfilled in your ears." That was an audacious claim! Even if Jesus did not make it so explicitly at the beginning of His ministry, there are signs that it is absolutely true to His purpose. When John the Baptist sent to ask if He were indeed the coming one (*Luke* 7.18), the reply is similarly reminiscent of *Isaiah* 61.1 as well as of *Isaiah* 26.19, 29.18f and 25.5f. While it is true that we have here a claim to a unique mission, are not there also further implications about the Spirit?

Leonard Hodgson is right to hold that " these references " are " of great significance. The revelation of God in Christ is not to be estimated by the unintelligent canon of numerical addition " (*The Doctrine of the Trinity*, 43). Yet no more than Jesus argued about God did He theologise about the Spirit. He did something, however, of incalculable importance: He revealed the Spirit as He did the Father, making Himself for ever inseparable from the divine power and life. With this in view we are prepared to find in the Johannine Gospel teaching a profound exposition of the mind of Jesus regarding the Holy Spirit, however much we may shrink from trying to isolate the Lord's precise words from the disciple's meditations.

III

We come now to the Apostolic doctrine; and I should like to mention four points only, the last of which we shall not consider in any detail in this article. They are (1) the relation of the Spirit to the glorified Christ; (2) the divinity of the Spirit; (3) the personality of the Spirit; and (4) the work of the Spirit in the Church and the World.

(1) For the first we turn at once to the Fourth Gospel. (*a*) Here we learn that *Truth is in Jesus and Truth is in the Spirit.*

Note in passing that the whole incarnate life of Jesus is in a sense already a glorified life for the author of John's Gospel. " We have seen his glory—glory of the unique son—full of grace and truth." And that " truth " is moral or spiritual and not merely intellectual.

Cf. *John* 6.63: What gives life is the Spirit
My words are Spirit and life.
3.34: He whom God has sent utters the words of God
God gives him the Spirit in no sparing measure.

That is why the Spirit is a witness to the meaning and the redeeming work of Christ. " He will take the things of me and show them to you . . . He will glorify me because he will receive of mine and show it to you " (16.13). " The Spirit of truth which proceedeth from the Father, he shall bear witness of me " (15.26). Compare 1 *John* 4.2: " Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: every spirit which confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God." The reality of the Incarnation is central to the historic faith. (*b*) Next, the Spirit comes to disciples from the risen Jesus. He breathes on them (*John* 20.19-23) and they receive power and wisdom and knowledge and moral authority, for in these gifts the presence of the Spirit is made known. But we are not given any careful statement of theory. If Christ says, " I will not leave you desolate: I come unto you " (14.18); He also promises that He will send the Paraclete to the disciples from the Father (15.26). Here we have verbs of ' coming ' and ' sending ' which are really inadequate to express the thought. *John* begins, as the primitive Church did, from the historical fact of Pentecost and proceeds intuitively and mystically, though doubtless on a genuine tradition, to ground the facts of Christian experience in discourses of Jesus. We know that the Holy Spirit does not operate fully nor is rightly apprehended as such until Jesus is glorified in death and ascension. We know that our communion with God the eternal and Christ the exalted Son is a spiritual reality and we can explain it only in terms of a divine presence and power within us, as individuals and as a body. These sayings about the Spirit in Jesus' Farewell Address " form part of the eschatological hope," as Howard puts it. He who gave the Sacrament promises also the abiding presence of his Spirit. The ministry

of the incarnate Word is carried on by the Teaching Spirit, so that there is no barren historicism in the Christian revelation. The time is coming and *now* is to worship in Spirit and in reality; or as in Paul, we have the first-points, the pledge and first instalment of the life that is eternal.

Both Paul and John, who are the theologians of the Spirit *par excellence* in the N.T., are wrestling with religious realities which have in the end compelled the Church to formulate the doctrine of the Trinity. The fact of Christ in life, death, and resurrection, and the fact of a Pentecostal life in spiritual power and fellowship hang together. That is why in Paul for example there is a virtual identification of Christ and the Spirit. Ernest Scott in one place suggests that a logical analysis of Pauline thought reveals that " he leaves no place for the spirit by unduly widening the field of its operation " (*The Spirit in the N.T.*, 186). He thinks the Pauline idea is merely (1) a concession to the tradition into which he entered and (2) a result of his own prophetic ecstasy in which he felt himself possessed by supernatural power (ib. 184f.) But does this do anything like justice to the Apostle's language? Who more than Paul insisted that the Spirit is in the redeemed man who is " in Christ "? The faithful, he says, are gradually transformed as they wait for the hope of righteousness, yet here and now they have a first instalment of spiritual life as a pledge of the glory still to come, because divine love has been poured into their hearts through the Holy Spirit. This is the equivalent in terms of the Spirit of what he means by the " I live, yet not I; Christ lives in me."

Consider 2 *Corinthians* 3.17: " Now the Lord (*Kyrios*) is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." Nowhere is Scott so confused as in his interpretation of this verse. Spirit here does not equal " the essential meaning," the reality as against the letter. Rawlinson's exegesis is right: " Now, *ho Kyrios*, in the passage I have just quoted, denotes the Spirit." But we cannot rest in that. In *Philippians* 2 and elsewhere it is clear that as a general rule Lord, *Kyrios*, is the far-excelling name of Jesus Christ as the Redeemer: and it is the O.T. name for God. In the Apostle's mind God and Christ are religiously one. What he is saying in 2 *Corinthians* 3.17 is that religiously the Spirit and Christ are one. *Galatians*

and *Romans* make the same point: " God sent forth the Spirit of his Son . . ."; in *Romans* 8, " the Spirit of God is the Spirit of Christ (9), Christ is in you . . . and the Spirit of him who raised Jesus is in you (10f.) " " The Spirit makes intercession for us and Christ who is at God's right hand makes intercession for us (27, 34)." There is, of course, no metaphysical definition in Paul of how the Spirit and Christ are thus one in their effects and character. But he is obviously grappling with the question of the relation of Jesus Christ to the Spirit of God. Whatever else we say of the dominating place of the Spirit in N.T. thought, we must say this: that Christ risen and the Spirit indwelling belong together as the sources of the new, eternal life which is the new creation.

(2) *Is the divinity of the Spirit implied?* In 1 *Corinthians* 2.11 we find the Spirit as the agent of revelation compared to the self-consciousness in man: " even so the things of God none knoweth, save the Spirit of God." Only God can thus know God. Similarly in *John*, as we have seen, the Spirit comes out of the eternal life of the Father and the Son. *John* 7.39 is not to be taken as implying that the Spirit only " begins " after Jesus is glorified in death.

The Spirit of God is eternal.
As Jesus Christ is pre-existent, the Lord with God, so the Spirit is.

We have to go on from defining the Spirit as power to defining Him as a " self " distinct in the Godhead; *John* unambiguously uses the personal pronoun. He hears. He will take of mine. He will lead you into all truth. Christian experience meant that the influence and presence of the Spirit was God helping them, God sanctifying their souls and bodies. " Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling," says Paul, " for it is God which worketh in you." And again, " Ye are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you." At a late period we have the baptismal formula expanded, as *Matthew* 28.19 gives it, into the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Divinity is implied.

(3) In the same way, " it is personal, divine power working directly for ethical and religious ends " (V. Taylor in *Headingley Lectures*, 67) that is meant by the Spirit. The Spirit, as

has been said (by Gloel), fulfils the functions of personal life. The virtues of the spiritual character are all great personal qualities and He who operates within to produce them as our Helper cannot be less than personal. It is probably asking the wrong question to enquire whether the N.T. specifically reaches a doctrine of the personality of the Spirit. Its writers were mostly concerned with the living realities of the Christian life; not with dogma as we have come to know it. What is certain is that this religious experience has compelled the Church to re-consider the idea of God. That is what Paul, the Jewish monotheist, had to do. That is what John had to do; and we deduce the governing conceptions of their faith from their writings. The doctrine of the one and only true God, which was their inheritance from the prophetic religion of the O.T., had to be re-interpreted to make room for new facts of grace and truth made flesh in the Word, that is Christ, and of communion effected by the Holy Spirit.

IV

This doctrine of the Spirit holds a dominating position throughout the New Testament. In *Hebrews* 2.4: God distributed the Holy Spirit as it pleased Him as a result of the preaching of the Gospel. 1 *Peter* is addressed to those who are called by the Father and have been consecrated by the Holy Spirit (1.2); the gospel was preached through the Holy Spirit (1.12); the prophets foretold the suffering of the Messiah and His glory, for the Spirit of Messiah was within them (1.10): cf. 2 *Peter* 1.21. The Seer of Revelation too was a man who was rapt in the Spirit. 1 *Timothy* (which is probably in its present form an early second century work) preserves a confession of faith in Him who was manifest in the flesh, indicated by the Spirit (3.16). *Titus* speaks of the water, that means regeneration and renewal under the Holy Spirit (3.5).

In its highest form, too, this is a doctrine which well answers the needs of the Church and the Christian in the World of to-day. The Spirit is the Spring of fresh life and fresh understanding. He releases in the faithful life-giving energies of the Kingdom in order that that may witness to the realities of God the Creator and the Redeemer. Preaching

is to stand in demonstration of His power. Worship is formal bunkum unless He is transforming mind and conscience. Even as the gift of the Spirit to the individual is a pledge of divine love, so the Church itself is meant to be God's engagement ring, a body growing in love, living so that it becomes symbolic of God's purpose for all mankind and the whole creation (cf. Hosea in the O.T.)

This doctrine, but especially the facts for which it accounts, is a challenge to the Church and its believers to become what they are already in principle and in ideal, a fellowship of God's Spirit through loyalty to the God-Man, Jesus Christ our Lord.

(*To be concluded*)

THE DOCTRINE OF GRACE IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

by The Rev. T. F. TORRANCE, D.Theol., B.D.

There is no one word for grace in the Old Testament as there is in the New, nor are the precise lineaments of the New Testament thought manifest, but the substance of the doctrine is there. In fact there is no language that expresses so profoundly and so tenderly the unaccountable love of God as the Hebrew of the Old Testament. This is not thought of abstractly but in intensely personal terms as the active love of One who is essentially the living and loving God of Israel. The dominant thought throughout is the amazing choice of Israel by God as grounded only in His free and unlimited love and as creating a community in fellowship with God who bestows Himself upon them as Father and Saviour for ever.

The word generally used to express this unsolicited and unaccountable love is *aheb* (אָהַב) which is rare in any of the Semitic languages except Hebrew. It is usually kept to refer to a love in God which is unconditioned except by His love and by His will to love. This is brought out with particular clarity in Deuteronomy. "The Lord did not set His love upon you nor choose you because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people but

because the Lord loved you, and because He would keep the oath which He had sworn unto your fathers[1] . . ." "The one thing," a recent scholar has said, "of which all the Old Testament writers are certain is that God's love for Israel was not because of anything that Israel had or was."[2]

The sovereign and gracious character of this love is emphasised by the use of another word and its derivatives *ḥanan* (חָנַן). The word originally seems to have meant to bend or to stoop,[3] but soon developed the meaning to be favourable with the idea of condescension attached to it.[4] The action, as Lofthouse has remarked, generally passes from the superior to the inferior,[5] and so carries with it the idea of unmerited favour.[6] Comparing *ḥen* with *ḥesed*, Mr. Snaith has said, "It tends to carry with it, to a greater extent that does *ḥesed*, the idea of unmerited favour, or of supreme graciousness and condescension on the part of the giver, who is the superior. There is not the slightest obligation on the part of the superior to to show this *ḥen*. It is all his generosity. There is no thought of any charge of harshness against him if he is not so gracious. The suppliant has not the slightest claim, nor is he in a position to do anything to enforce his claim beyond the actual petition itself."[7] That is probably to go too far as a generalisation for there are times when the Old Testament has a tone of reprimand when favour is not showed, as to the young,[8] or to elders,[9] or to Joseph.[10] However when the thought is applied to God it is quite clear that an attitude is involved which cannot be enforced and cannot be claimed. In discussing the question how a man can be just with God, Job sees that he cannot plead his own righteousness for it is nothing. But even though he were righteous, he would not answer his Judge; rather would he betake himself to imploring His favour (*ḥen*).[11] In regard to God there are no grounds

[1] Deut. 7.7f.; see also 9.4f.; 10.15; 23.5.

[2] Norman H. Snaith, *The Distinctive Ideas of the Old Testament* (1944), p. 135. For other references see p. 136f.

[3] Cf. Jer. 22.23; 1 Sam. 4.19; Lam. 4.6.

[4] Judges 21.22.

[5] W. H. Lofthouse, *Ḥen and Ḥesed in the O.T.*, in Z. AT. W. (1933), p. 30.

[6] Cf. the derivative חִנָּם meaning for nought, Gen. 29.15; Ex. 21.2.11; Num. 11.5, etc.

[7] Op. cit., p .128. [8] Deut. 28.50. [9] Lam. 4.16. [10] Gen. 42.21.

[11] Job. 9.1f., espec. v. 15.

upon which His *ḥen* can be claimed. The favour of God is His own freedom. It only can be bestowed. That is even more strikingly clear in the words of the Lord to Moses, " I will be gracious unto whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy."[1]

It is interesting to note that the standing translation of *ḥen* in the LXX is the word *charis* (χάρις), particularly in such expressions as " to find favour " or " to obtain favour," but in those passages where *ḥen* is related to the very nature of God as gracious and merciful and full of pity, *charis* is significantly not used at all. Twice *charis* is used to render *raḥam* and once *tob*, but not as spoken of God. The reason for this seems undoubtedly to lie in the fact that *charis* in its classical and hellenistic usage had a sensuous substratum in its meaning, a semi-physical sense of charm or gracefulness as something aesthetically pleasing, while the Hebrew *ḥen* never has this sense.[2] It seems therefore that the shrewd translators of the LXX wanted to avoid the possibility of *charis* corrupting the Old Testament thought of the grace of God into something semi-physical and aesthetically pleasing, the very tendency that later became so rampant in the second, and third, and fourth centuries of the Christian era, and has ever since left its mark on the doctrine. Thus practically the only real significance that *charis* derives from its Septuagintal association is that it may be related to the divine favour, but not in expressions which are of intrinsic religious import. It is, however, when we take the Hebrew words *aheb* and *ḥen* together that we see the true beginnings of what a reminted *charis* came to express in the New Testament. If, as the late H. R. Mackintosh once wrote, " Grace is love in its princely and sovereign form, love to the indifferent and the disloyal, whose one claim is their need,"[3] then we have that clearly expressed in *aheb* and *ḥen*.

The Old Testament approaches still nearer to the New Testament *charis* in another of its great words, *ḥesed*. This is a word upon which recent research has thrown a flood of new light. The usual translation of the Authorised Version

[1] Ex. 33.19. See also Job 8.15; Deut. 3.23; Ps. 143.1.

[2] Nor does *ḥen* have the sense of gratitude or thanks as *charis* does. Cf. Lofthouse, op. cit., p. 30. This is a view in which Snaith concurs, op. cit., p. 130.

[3] H. R. Mackintosh, *The Christian Apprehension of God*, p. 212 (1934).

is lovingkindness, but it is now generally recognised that while this does convey a large part of the meaning, it leaves out what is most distinctive in *ḥesed*, which does not refer to any act or relation of kindness indiscriminately, but to one "where there is some recognised tie"[1] and in which the emphasis is laid upon the persistence and devotion of love.[2] It is closely bound up with a two-sided relationship within which covenanted kindness is a sure bond if not also a duty.[3] The recognised tie which *ḥesed* seems to imply is usually known as *berith* or covenant. Such a bond or covenant might be on a private or personal level as that between David and Jonathan, but in Israel the ties of determining importance were those made first personally by God with Abraham and the patriarchs, nationally with Israel at Sinai, and then with the royal house of David.[4] These ties formed the essential sphere of *ḥesed* within which *ḥesed* held Israel together as a special people of God with statutes and judgments and constituted them into a nation in which brotherly-kindness and leal-love were the rule of their individual and national life, but all with a special relation to God who stood at the head of the covenant. *Ḥesed* is therefore not to be regarded as a virtue among virtues, or even as one at the top of the scale, but rather as the fundamental relationship upon which the whole structure of Israelite society and religion rested. As such it embraces all social and personal relationships, but primarily it is a relationship between men and God which includes also men's relations with one another because they are all related to God in *ḥesed*.[5] This means that the social duties and relationships of men among themselves were not regarded as merely ethical or legal, but primarily and principally religious, and in fact

[1] W. F. Lofthouse, op. cit., p. 30.

[2] N. H. Snaith, op. cit., p. 94ff.

[3] Dr. Nelson Glueck has defined *ḥesed* as "die dem Rechts-Pflicht-Verhältnis entsprechende Verhaltungsweise." *Das Wort Hesed im attl. Sprachgebrauche als menschl. u. göttl. gemeinschaftsgemässe Verhaltungsweise*, Giessen, 1927. A better German expression would be *Gemeinschaftstreue*.

[4] From Amos we gather that there was an even wider tie, a generally recognised brotherly covenant (בְּרִית אַחִים) which though not a formal covenant held sway as a kind of *jus gentium* (Amos 1.9). Certainly the O.T. speaks of the whole earth as full of God's *ḥesed*. Ps. 33.5; 104.24; 119.64. It covers all creatures, Ps. 36.7; 89.15; 145.9; cf. Ps. 136. 1-9.

[5] Cf. the expression "the *ḥesed* of God" or "the *ḥesed* of the Lord," 2 Sam. 9.3; 1 Sam. 20.14. See Sellin ad loc., *Theologie des alten Testaments*, p. 28.

radically bound up with the persistent and unshakable love of God. It was this which was meant to distinguish Israel from the other nations. *Ḥesed* was regarded as the foundation of character and prosperity. It permeated and dominated the whole life. The man who was true to the *ḥesed*-relationship with God and so also to his fellow men was called *ḥasid*. He is the man who, as loyal in the service of God, partakes of the *ḥesed*-bound society, practising *ḥesed* himself and entitled to expect it from his fellows. *Ḥasid* is thus the cult expression for the believing and upright man who is contrasted with the sinner. What the Lord requires of him is to do justly, to love mercy, and walk humbly before his God. As practised by the believer the nearest New Testament expression to *ḥesed* would seem to be the Pauline "doing the truth in love."[1]

The important thing, however, in the idea of *ḥesed* is the *ḥesed*-relation of God to man, for the whole covenant-society is grounded upon God's everlasting love and mercy, on His faithful devotion and persistent loyalty, without which the covenant could not stand. Writing of Isaiah 54.8, Mr. Snaith has said[2]: "Here undoubtedly, as in all these cases, *ḥesed* of God, is that it is everlasting, determined, unshakable. Wonderful as is His love for His covenant-people, His steady persistence in it is more wonderful still. The most important of all the distinctive ideas of the Old Testament is God's steady and extraordinary persistence in continuing to love wayward Israel in spite of Israel's insistent waywardness."

It is probable that recent research is laying too great an emphasis upon the association of a definite bond with *ḥesed*. There are instances, as Bultmann has pointed out, where the covenant idea retreats into the background and *ḥesed* becomes almost the equivalent of grace.[3] But more important is the fact that while *ḥesed* always, or nearly always, comes to involve a tie, the tie itself implies *ḥesed*. *Ḥesed* can take place where there is no previous tie, but usually anticipates one and creates it. That seems clear, for example, from the instance of David's action toward the house of Nahash. "Then said David, I will shew kindness unto Hanun the son of Nahash,

[1] Ephesians 4.15: ἀληθεύων ἐν ἀγάπῃ.
[2] Op. cit., p. 102.
[3] R. Bultmann in Kittel, *Theol. Wörterbuch zum N.T.* Bd. 1, p. 476. Cf. Est. 2.9.17; Ezra 7.28, 9.8; Dan. 1.9.

as his father shewed kindness unto me."[1] In the case of the spies who were shown kindness by Rahab,[2] it was the kindness which led to the forming of the tie between people who were not under the same covenant or blood-relationship. Here the idea is simply that an act of such kindness, puts one under obligation to render a return. The important fact is that *ḥesed* is used both for the initial act and the return, and the underlying idea is that the relation has been created in the first place by an act of kindness itself. Such a relationship may then be confirmed by a bond or a covenant and bound by an oath as in the case of Rahab or of Jonathan and David. Thus there appear to be two uses of *ḥesed*. There is a primary use which denotes an initial act of kindness and this merges into the idea of freely putting oneself into a position of obligation; and there is a secondary or applied use where *ḥesed* is regarded as the normal act within the mutual relations of obligation so formed.

This seems to fall into line with Elbogen's contention that a large part of *ḥesed* means promise.[3] *Ḥesed* is the act of kindness by which God chooses Israel and promises therewith blessing and salvation. God promises to bring Himself into such a relation with Israel that His mercy and might, are, as it were, at their disposal. Thus *ḥesed* is really the self-giving of God to Israel, a promise which is confirmed by an oath and established in a definite covenant. Hence because the covenant is grounded outside the relation of mutual obligation in the eternal promise of God, the *ḥesed* implied in it is one in which God's people can trust for ever, for though the mountains depart and the hills remove, God's mercy remains true,[4] and even though Israel prove faithless and break the covenant, God will still hold fast to His loving purpose and will not be thwarted.[5] In this light *ḥesed* must be viewed as the great sacramental word of the Old Testament faith, while the covenant itself must be looked upon as the sacramental pledge of God's unaccountable love. *Ḥesed* is therefore not only the

[1] 2 Sam. 10.2.

[2] Joshua 2.4f. For another clear example see 1 Kings 20.31f.

[3] In *Oriental Studies, Festschrift for Paul Haupt*, 1926. *Ḥesed-Verpflichtung, Verheissung, Bekräftigung*. Cf. Ps. 77.8; Micah 7.20; 2 Sam. 7.15f.; Is. 55.3, etc.

[4] Isaiah 54.8f.; Ps. 89.1f., etc.

[5] This is the theme of Hosea.

great presupposition of men's relations with God constitutive of all their life, but it is the decisive and eternal deed of God's love which makes the ground of men's approach to God an act and a promise in which He is irrevocably committed. Ultimately, as Hosea and Jeremiah see it, it means the establishment of a new covenant, contrary to men's expectations, not one in which the divine command forms the basis of men's relations with God, but one in which the divine self-commitment invites men to approach God on the ground of His unaccountable but everlasting love. This was first given actual expression in the giving of the Old Testament law in which is to be found, it is sometimes thought, the nearest analogy in Judaism to the Pauline conception of grace.[1] But the Old Testament looks beyond that. Because God's *ḥesed* persists in spite of man's rebellion and was in fact " never limited by what was required in any legal or equitable sense,"[2] it was perceived that God would give a new law in which this ultimate nature of the divine *ḥesed* would be realised. This thought in the teaching of the O.T. prophets has been very clearly brought out by Mr. Snaith.[3] Starting from the idea of eager, ardent desire, which he feels to be the original meaning of the root *ḥsd*, he traces the significance of *ḥesed* in the O.T. as God's sure unswerving love that stands by His covenant and will not be thwarted. In spite of the apostasy and waywardness of Israel, in spite of all the calamities that have broken upon her, and may yet break upon her, God's *ḥesed* does not change. " Though man himself will not turn to God, yet God Himself can bring this to pass. God's sure unswerving love will find a way by which even stubborn, unrepentant Israel can turn. It will mean new hearts, but God will accomplish even this. Then there will be a turning to God in all sincerity, and loyal obedience to His Law."[4]

In the Old Testament this is still only an eschatological conception bound up with the doctrine of the remnant, and also with the doctrine of the Messiah, but an actual pledge of it has already been given in the Law which will one day

[1] Thus G. P. Wetter, *Charis. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des ältesten Christentums*, 1913, p. 10. Cf. Rom. 3.1ff.

[2] N. H. Snaith, op. cit., p. 140.

[3] Ibid. See especially p. 110f.

[4] Ibid. p. 121f.

be written new in the hearts of men. This means, however, that the answer of salvation by sheer grace is given not simply out of the mercy of God but right out of the heart of His righteousness. That very thought is integral to the Old Testament *ḥesed*. If the actualisation of the divine *ḥesed* among men takes the form of a covenant, then the content of that covenant is the self-bestowal of the Holy God and the self-affirmation of the Holy God in the form of the law. Thus *ḥesed* brings men into a positive relation to the righteous will of God, and entails righteousness or *tsedeq*. *Tsedeq* like *ḥesed* is essentially a covenant word[1]; that is to say, it is not righteousness conceived in the abstract but regarded as obtaining within the sphere of personal relations between a man and God who is Himself *tsedeq par excellence*. In this way *tsedeq* and *ḥesed* really involve one another. It is the God of *ḥesed* and *tsedeq* who stands at the head of the covenant who shews *ḥesed* unto men and draws them into a relation or bond of *ḥesed* with Himself, but just because He draws them into a bond thus with Himself, the Holy and Righteous God, He requires them to be conformed to His righteousness. He requires *tsedeq* of them as part of the covenantal bond of *ḥesed*. At the same time because God shews *ḥesed* He bestows the means in the law whereby men in the covenant may actually conform to the divine righteousness.

As therefore *ḥesed* contains at its very heart the idea of God's transcendent righteousness, the law as the content of the covenant is regarded as the pledge of His *ḥesed*. Israel was betrothed to God, as Hosea said, not in lovingkindness and mercies only, but in righteousness and in judgment.[2] The same thought abounds in the hundred and nineteenth Psalm where delight is taken in the statutes and judgments of the Law as being not only the evidences of God's *ḥesed*, but the very means of turning a man into the way of the will and love of God. No doubt this is done by the outward instruction of the Law in the form of rulings or judgments of the law as the direction of man's life, that is by *mishpat*, and by inward

[1] See W. Eichrodt, *Theologie des alten Testaments*, vol. 1, p. 121ff. This falls in line with C. H. Dodd's enlightening suggestion that the verb צדק originally meant "to be in the right," rather than "to be righteous." *The Bible and the Greeks*, p. 46.

[2] Hos. 2.19.

meditation, but the time will come when the new covenant is made with its new Law, and then men will have the divine *mishpat* so written upon their heart that spontaneously and naturally they will turn themselves into the way and covenant of the divine love.[1] Here it is the idea of *mishpat*, a declared ruling of the law, by which a man may repeatedly be turned into the way of righteousness, and therefore into the covenant of God's *ḥesed*, that is the connecting link between grace and righteousness.

The astonishing thing about these great Hebrew words is the facility they have of merging into one another or overlapping one another. That is just as true of *tsedeq* and *tsedaqah* as it is of *ḥesed*. And this is particularly clear in regard to the righteousness of God, for it is the prerogative of God's righteousness to save men, while the love at the back of the divine *tsedeq* or *tsedaqah* is as ultimate and unaccountable as the love expressed in *aheb* or *ḥen* or *ḥesed*. As they involve one another in this way, *ḥesed* on one side and *tsedeq* or *tsedaqah* on the other, both become practically equivalents for salvation and justification and forgiveness.[2] Ultimately the sure and unswerving love of God finds a righteous way of forgiving the sinner, and in spite of his apostasy of turning him back with a new heart and a new righteousness into the bond of divine love. The major point here, so difficult for us to grasp and to express in any other language than Hebrew, is that righteousness and love, grace and justice, are held together as differentiations within the same unity, and even within the unity of a single thought or word.

An interpretation along these lines would seem to be justified by an examination of the Septuagint translation of the Old Testament. It is quite apparent there that the Greek language has no word nor concept equivalent to the Hebrew either in the case of *ḥesed* or in the case of *tsedeq*, and has to make use of words that convey only part of the original Hebrew. But what is more serious the Old Testament conceptions of righteousness and love which are essentially of the same tissue and are only thought of as they involve one another are here sundered into justice and mercy and shorn therefore of a

[1] This is the thought of Jeremiah 8.4ff. See Snaith ad loc., op. cit., p. 121.

[2] See Psalms 24.5; 33.5; 40.11; 51.1f; 103.6; 119.41; Is. 47.4; 51.5f.; 56.1, etc.

great deal of their richness and depth. It is significant, however, that in a time when Hebrew religion was hardening into legalism, *ḥesed* should receive the rendering ἔλεος in the majority of cases. This is the more remarkable when we examine the parallel case of *ḥasid* which is usually rendered ὅσιος,[1] and only once rendered by a word connoting kindness. To the mind of the translators therefore, *ḥasid* conveyed the idea of devoutness or moral correctness with reference to the divine law.[2] The very fact that *ḥesed* did not receive the same treatment points to the fact that in the old Hebrew connotation of the term, the aspect of love or kindness really predominated, and predominated to such an extent that even the legalism of the period could not reduce it to a mere covenant virtue or duty on the part of men, or to an aspect of divine justice or obligation on the part of God. This surely would have been the case had *ḥesed* merely meant covenant faithfulness. At the same time the translators did realise that ἔλεος would not always render the word adequately, and so we find a considerable number of cases where it is interestingly translated by δικαιοσύνη,[3] showing justification for the aspects of *ḥesed* that modern research has rediscovered.

An examination of the other side of the case, that is of the use of ἔλεος and ἐλεημοσύνη, shows that these words were sometimes employed to render other Hebrew words than those which would normally be their equivalents. The most striking of these are *tsedeq* and *tsedaqah* and *emet*. This of course suggests that these words have a wider range and a deeper significance than their normal Greek equivalents are capable of bearing. In the case of *tsedeq*, for example, the Greek δικαιοσύνη, which means right conduct towards one's neighbour, or precise justice, excludes what is really distinctive in the Hebrew thought, and this has to be corrected at times by an unusual equivalent which lays the whole emphasis upon mercy.[4] But even ἔλεος which means little more than mercy in the sense of pity, fails altogether to convey the more positive emphasis in *tsedeq* which is more like "love of mercy."

[1] See C. H. Dodd, op. cit., p. 62. [2] Ibid.

[3] Gen. 19.19; 20.13; 21.23; 24.27; 32.10; Exod. 15.15; 34.7; Prov. 20.28; Is. 63.7.

[4] See again C. H. Dodd, op. cit., p.42 ff.

All this means that the thought of the Hebrew Old Testament is greatly impoverished in the LXX, and particularly at the very point where the Old Testament bears the full seed of the New Testament *charis*. At the same time the Septuagintal dialectic of ἔλεος and δικαιοσύνη both in regard to *ḥesed* and in regard to *tsedeq* sheds in its own way illumination upon the fact that the answer of salvation given by the Old Testament goes back to the very heart of righteousness and love conceived as one. That is the point where we approach as nearly as possible a real doctrine of grace. The Psalms and the latter half of Isaiah echo this particularly, where if the full thought of grace is wanting whole sections are laden with the substance of it. For there the divine *Tsedeq* and *Ḥesed*, each of which half involves the other, stand together as the ground upon which the sinner can cry for forgiveness and salvation, and actually receive the vindicating deliverance of the Lord.[1] At the same time, as we have already seen, it became clear to the prophets in particular, that if such salvation is possible, it is only because God has provided that ground, and although man has forfeited all claim upon it, God's love will prevail for its own sake. But the very ground of this love is identical with that occupied by the divine righteousness, so that when God's love prevails at last in the salvation of men, it is as holy righteous love. And because this love finds an answer of salvation rising out of the ground of the divine righteousness itself, far from evading righteousness, it actually puts the sinner in the right with God and His righteousness. This is justifying love which, now that righteousness has no other demands, can be trusted without fear.

(To be followed by "The Doctrine of Grace in the New Testament")

[1] See W. Eichrodt, op. cit., p. 125.

THE CHURCH OF THE REIGNING LORD

by The Rev. R. STUART LOUDEN, B.D.

We can trace a revival of theology in the Reformed Churches in the last quarter of a century. The new theological interest merits being called a revival of theology, for there has been a fresh and more thorough attention given to certain realities, either ignored or treated with scant notice for a considerable time previously.

First among such realities now receiving more of the attention which their relevance and authority deserve, is the Bible, the record of the Word of God. There is an invigorating and convincing quality about theology which is Biblical throughout, being based on the witness of the Scriptures as a whole. The valuable results of careful Biblical scholarship had had an adverse effect on theology in so far as theologians had completely separated the Old Testament from the New in their treatment of Biblical doctrine, or in expanding Christian doctrine, had spoken of the theological teaching of the Synoptic Gospels, the Pauline Epistles, the Johannine writings, and so on, as if there were no such thing as one common New Testament witness. It is being seen anew that the Holy Scriptures contain a complete history of God's saving action. The presence of the complete Bible open at the heart of the Church, recalls each succeeding Christian generation to that one history of God's saving action, to which the Church is the living witness. The New Testament is one, for its Lord is one, and Christian theology must stand four-square on the foundation of its whole teaching.

Next to the Bible stands the Church, another reality once again being given a more adequate and proper place in Protestant theology. The Church as the Body of Christ is a unique entity and has a peculiar task within the temporal order. The Church, prepared for through the Chosen People, was finally realised through the Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ and the gift of the Holy Spirit. She exists in a state of tension in this critical age between the Resurrection and the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. A divine creation,

she rejoices in the Holy Spirit, a supramundane gift. She is God's instrument for proclaiming the Gospel in this the time of grace. This biblical and theological conception of the Church is true to Calvin's statement: " Beyond the pale of the Church, no forgiveness of sins, no salvation, can be hoped for."

Eschatology is also receiving a different and more intelligent treatment in present-day theology. If the Bible contains the Word of God, one and authoritative, then the eschatological element in its teaching cannot be treated as a foreign or extraneous element, as some liberal theologians have regarded it, but rather as part of the very substance of the Christian faith. Christianity stresses the importance of the time process. All gnostic or hellenic tendencies which loosen the faith's roots from the historical setting are to be rejected. History is a stern reality with the imminent Day of Judgment overshadowing it. Grace is rooted in the historical events of the Cross and Resurrection, and our faith is concerned alike with the past, the present and the future. Past, present and future are all part of the divine plan of salvation.

The significance of the eschatological element and the time process is crystallised in the awaited coming again of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Church has been constrained to ponder anew the meaning of the Second Coming. The Church awaits an aeon to come succeeding the present aeon, the " then " opposed to the " now." The essential element in the Christian hope is not to calculate the date of the Advent but to hold to the assurance that Christ will come in glory to complete at the end of time the work He has begun and now carries on as it were in concealment. Such a hope and expectancy are vital to the New Testament message as a whole. The Church to-day must rethink the meaning and importance of the Lord's Advent.

That sounder theological approach in modern Protestantism is seen very clearly in a valuable study by Professor Oscar Cullmann of Basel: *Königsherrschaft Christi und Kirche im Neuen Testament* (*Zürich*, 1941). This booklet gives due place to such great realities as the Bible, the Church, the time process, and the Second Coming.

This earnestly Scriptural study draws a very helpful distinction between Christ's Kingdom or Lordship and the

Kingdom of God. Even where there may be apparent verbal confusion between the two conceptions in the New Testament, especially in the Gospels, the two conceptions are to be clearly distinguished. Christ's Kingship belongs to this the final epoch of this aeon, the present period of tension between the Resurrection and the Second Coming. His Lordship was inaugurated by the Ascension, and lasts until, the Millenium that follows Christ's return being completed, " then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the Kingdom to God, even the Father " (1 *Corinthians* 15.24). That surrender of Lordship by Christ to the Father is the final and full realisation of the Kingdom of God, which, it will be seen, lies outside history, transcending even the Day of the Lord.

Professor Cullmann opens his study with an analysis of the character of Christ's Lordship as described in *Philippians* 2.9-11. According to the Church's most primitive confession of faith, " Jesus Christ is Lord," Christ is made Lord not only over all men but over all things visible and invisible (*Philippians* 2.10). The invisible powers are made subject to Christ (1 *Peter* 3.22). There is plenty of evidence that the confession of Christ as Lord is a confession of His kingly dominion over all the powers of the entire visible and invisible creation. We have to remember that Jesus Christ whose present Lordship is so complete, was mediator of creation in the beginning (*John* 1.3; *Colossians* 1.16), and will be mediator of the new creation at the end (1 *Thessalonians* 4.16).

We have to grasp this link in Christ between creation and redemption (*i.e.*, the " new creation "), in order to understand the relationship between the Kingdom of Christ and the Church. " Not only on the first page of the Old Testament but throughout the whole Christian Bible right to the last page of the New Testament, Creation is spoken of." As Jesus Christ " who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature " (*Colossians* 1.15), is vital to creation, so He is vital to the Church, for " He is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead " (*Colossians* 1.18).

" The New Testament relationship between the Kingdom of Christ and the Church of Christ is grounded in the solidarity which binds the whole creation to men." As through the sin

of man made in the image of God the whole creation came under a curse, experiencing the effects of the Fall (*Romans* 8.22), so redemption in Christ at Calvary's Cross had an effect on creation as a whole (*Matthew* 27.51; *Colossians* 1.20). This careful examination of the New Testament material brings out the universal character of Christ's present Kingship, who is Lord over all creation and over the Church.

" The Christian waits for God's Kingdom, but he waits for it because he knows that the reign of Christ has already begun." Our present life is set within the Kingdom of Christ which has already broken into time (2 *Timothy* 1.10). The Messianic hope of the 110th Psalm was fulfilled in Christ through His Ascension, when the promise was given: " this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven " (*Acts* 1.11). Thus we are living in the last phase of the present aeon whose end will come in the inauguration of the new creation. The first twenty chapters of the Apocalypse are also intended to show that we are living within the time of Christ's Reign, the era of the Church.

Both Christ's Reign and Christ's Church were inaugurated in the decisive events of the Saviour's life: the relevance of history cannot be over-emphasised. The Church, as shadowed forth in the Chosen People and kindred conceptions in the Old Testament, was finally realised through the Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. When Jesus promised to build His Church on the rock of faith in Himself, the Christ, He linked this promise with the first forecast of His own Death, the means of inaugurating the Church. The Church's life originated in the Pentecostal gift of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit which belongs to the new creation, the Kingdom of God.

" That the Church of Christ was founded through the Spirit at Pentecost, as the Church of the final epoch (*Endzeit*), is ground for the Creed later associating in its third article, Spirit, Church, and Expectation."

Both the Church and the Reign of Christ end in the Millenium which is a symbol to indicate that those who belong to Christ, participate in the Lord's final act: the Apostles and the saints will participate in judgment (*Matthew* 19.28; 1 *Corinthians* 6.2). The Church then lives in a state of tension.

The eschatological element is already present since the Church receives the Holy Spirit which belongs to the new creation which must eventually break in.

Cullmann writes elsewhere: "The Church acts with power when, conscious of her faith in the past and in the present and of her hope in the future, she proclaims Christ in words and in deeds and bears witness in such a way that past, present and future are united in the most intimate way. She believes while hoping and hopes while believing. She interprets present events according to this faith and hope. She shows us that the events looked at in that way do not allow us to date the end but rather to apprehend our age as the last epoch of the *αἰὼν οὗτος* in which Christ already possesses all power in heaven and in earth, reigns over the invisible powers, and is represented by His Body, the Church, but in which the hostile powers are not yet annihilated. That time is already wholly determined by hope in the future, since the main element of that future, the Spirit (*πνεῦμα*) is already present as the earnest (*ἀρραβών*) and first fruits (*ἀπαρχή*) of what is coming" (*Le Retour du Christ, espérance de l'Église selon le Nouveau Testament*. Traduction de André Dumas. Neuchatel 1943).

The universal character of Christ's Lordship has a direct bearing on the authority of earthly states. This New Testament study is most relevant to the modern problem of totalitarianism. As St. Paul teaches (*Romans* 13, 1ff.)—and his teaching applies to the pagan state as well as to the explicitly Christian state—the authority of the state is to be obeyed because it is ordained of God, and through such authority, Christ reigns indirectly. Where the state loosens its relationship to the invisible power behind its rule, through its own self-deification, it is guilty of opposing and resisting Christ's Lordship and assumes the rôle of the "Beast" (*Revelation* 13.1ff.) That the state may be either God's instrument or the "Beast" is again expressive of the tension always present in the era of Christ's Reign. In regard to obedience to the state as part of God's ordinance (provided the state allows the Church freedom of life), Professor Cullmann points out that the Christian is capable of a profounder earthly citizenship than others exercise, because he alone has this higher conception of the state as under and within Christ's dominion.

Although the flesh and the last enemy, death, are not yet destroyed, the whole creation is already under Christ's Lordship. He is the " Head " over all things (*Colossians* 2.10; *Ephesians* 1.10), but also in a special sense " Head " over the Church which is His Body (*Colossians* 1.18; *Ephesians* 1.22). The Church then is the very heart and kernel of Christ's Reign, and only from within the Church can the actual Reign of Christ be apprehended. The conception of the Church as the Body of Christ expresses the centrality of the Church in Christ's Kingdom. It is in the Church that the Exalted Christ embodies Himself in the world: " why persecutest thou *Me?* " (*Acts* 9.4). The Church has to become Christ in the world (*Galatians* 4.19).

The Church, Christ's own Body, lives in that tension between the " now " and the " then." On the one hand, the Church is a Crucified Body, living in that realm where sin and the flesh are still found, and where the subordinate powers keep trying to break free from Christ's dominion (*Colossians* 1.24). On the other hand, the Church is also a Risen and Exalted Body, because she has the Spirit which belongs to the age to come. The writer quotes Kierkegaard's word about the Church: " Drawn by the Exalted One, she goes the way of the Humiliated One."

In Christ's vicarious death, there was accomplished that for which Israel was chosen, namely God's saving action. In His Death as the Son of Man (*Daniel* 7.13ff.) and the Servant of Jehovah (*Isaiah* 52.13ff.), Jesus Christ represented the Holy People, that is the Remnant of Israel, through whom salvation had been expected. That Remnant had vicariously represented Israel, the original Chosen People, who in turn had represented mankind in the hope of redemption. What Israel was to accomplish for man finally fell on the shoulders of the One. Now with Calvary accomplished, the Church, as the Body of the Christ who died the One for the many, has a vicarious mission in the midst of mankind, for through her is the way for all men to come to salvation (see Paul's argument in *Galatians* 3.6 - 4.7). Thus we trace two main movements in God's saving action: " The one runs from the many to the One. That is the Old Covenant. The other runs from the One to the many. That is the New Covenant.

Right at the centre stands the decisive fact of Christ's Death."

The regal character of the Church's life suggests that its true, inward life is a kind of "realised eschatology" (1 *Corinthians* 4.8; *Revelation* 1.6). Like Christ incarnate among men, so is the Church, His Body, in the world. The special position of the Church lies in her members' conscious knowledge of Christ's present Lordship. That the Church is composed of sinners, means that the Church is both a gift from God and a task for God. The first duty of the Church is the proclamation of the Gospel, and since Christ has been given all power in heaven and on earth, there can be no sphere whatsoever from which the Church's witness and preaching are excluded.

The eventual coming of God's Kingdom does not depend on the success or failure of the Church's proclamation. Christ's victory is seen in the Church's suffering, just as in the Cross lay the triumph of Christ over all powers.

"The proclamation of the message to all people must extend over the whole period of the Church between Christ's Ascension and His Coming Again. For the end will only come when the Gospel has been preached to everyone (*Mark* 13.10; *Matthew* 24.14). There is no suggestion that all must be converted for the Kingdom of God to be able to come. The coming of God's Kingdom is in no way dependent on whether the Church is large or small at the day which God has appointed for the end of this aeon. The Church however, must keep on at that to which she is called: proclaiming the Gospel to all."

This able piece of New Testament exposition leaves us with a very impressive picture of the unique and divine nature of the Church. Cullmann helps us to see more clearly the implications of the Church's vocation as the Body of Christ, and he presents most forcibly the Biblical doctrine of the Church as the very instrument of God's salvation.

The impression left by this study is that it has dealt with the *whole* teaching of the New Testament. We do not have to discuss whether or not we agree with this theology: if this indeed is an accurate account of the Word spoken by God in His great redemptive action in Christ, then this is the Truth,

the Revelation which the Church must obey. This booklet seeks to expound the New Testament's authoritative word on the nature and meaning of Christ's Lordship; the character and vocation of the Church of Christ; the relations of Church and State; the relevance of history; and the vital Christian hope in the Lord's Second Advent.

Such vigorous Scriptural doctrine sustains the Church's life and vitality, delivering her members from pessimism and fear, and strengthening her knowledge of her Lord who now reigns.

A QUESTION OF WORDS

by The Rev. Professor J. G. RIDDELL, D.D.

Every modern estimate of the religious situation in our country has laid stress on the drift from religion which is increasingly apparent and ever more serious in its effects. Not only is there widespread indifference to the claims of Christianity, but the separation between those within the Churches and those outside grows more decisive and complete. In habit and outlook, in conduct and ways of life, the contrast between Christian and non-Christian standards becomes more and more clearly marked.

Every diagnosis of this situation and every prescription for its remedy raises the question of words and their use. Even if we do not agree that the drift from religion is due to outworn theological terminology or to meaningless pulpit jargon alone, we must recognise that misunderstanding and indifference are often increased by the strangeness of the Christian vocabulary in the ears of the modern man. "We feel bound to make some attempt to translate certain theological statements of the Eternal Gospel into language such as present-day hearers might themselves employ to express spiritual needs of which they are acutely conscious." In making this statement the authors of *Towards the Conversion of England*, (p. 24) quote from the Archbishops' *Report on Training for the Ministry*, (para. 107): "Full attention should be given to training ordinands in the power of translating the technical language of theology into terms

understood by ordinary people." Similarly the Church of Scotland Report, *Into all the World*, dealing with the vocabulary of evangelism, insists that " many of the commonest words of our Faith have lost much of their real value " (p. 50). We must seek not only to go where people are but to speak as people speak. " Words, once familiar but now remote, must be made vital again by putting into them the meaning which the Gospel gave them " (p. 51).

The same theme appeared in the overture to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland of 1946 asking their recognition of " the need for a new translation of the Bible in the language of the present day . . . in order that the Church might be better equipped for its task of evangelism." The archaic language of the Authorised Version, it is suggested, is unfamiliar and obscure, and there is now general agreement among representatives of the principal Churches that a translation in modern language would be of great assistance in proclaiming the Gospel, and especially in the religious instruction of the young. This is borne out by the experience of overseas students in our Theological Colleges who sometimes find themselves in difficulties not so much through ignorance of English as from the differences of idiom and expression between the Authorised Version and our modern speech.

The question of words arises, however, not less significantly in two other contexts—in theological thought and specialised scholarship, on the one hand, and in the Church's care of its own membership on the other. Before discussing more fully the vocabulary of evangelism, therefore, it may be worth while to consider the use of theological and religious language in these connections.

The theologian, in his own special work, has responsibility for stating his views in language which his fellow theologians can fully understand. Careful definition and precise use of technical terms is an essential precaution, especially in the case of words like revelation, incarnation or atonement, which are capable of a wide variety of meaning. There is inevitably a danger of reducing argument to mere *logomache*, or of concealing an important issue by an unorthodox or even a casual use of words. Horace Bushnell's question about McLeod Campbell's employment of the word penitence illustrates the point.

" Is it clear when Mr. Campbell speaks of repentance in this manner that he means any such thing as we commonly understand by the word? " Dr. H. R. Mackintosh comments on this when he says that " to speak of Christ's penitence is wilfully to re-define a word, to insist that in one case it can be employed without that core of meaning which everywhere else is constitutive" (*Some Aspects of Christian Belief*, p. 92). When one hears the not uncommon criticism of utterances of one theological school or another—" We do not really understand what they have in mind "—" Their words do not seem to have any significance for us "—" It sounded quite impressive, but what does it really mean? "—we are reminded of the need for clear communication of ideas and careful use of terms on the part of all who claim to make contribution to our common theological scholarship.

It may not be out of place to mention here an aspect of this subject which is connected both with the technical expression of theological truth and with the communication of Christian principles to scholars and students in other departments of learning. There can be no doubt that increasing specialisation tends in some degree to an ignorance of disciplines outside the immediate interest of the specialist whether scientist or doctor, engineer or theologian. We are often as ignorant of the language of other specialists as they may be of ours. Anything which can break down the isolation of difficult departments in the field of learning and enable them to appreciate one another better and even to master a strange vocabulary more easily is of benefit to each and all. The Christian teacher or student in our Universities and Colleges has a special opportunity to learn and to teach through his contacts with others who, if they find him interested in their own technical phrases and their significance, will not fail to show a responsive interest in the language and meaning of his faith.

The explanation of theological terms to those who have no acquaintance with specialised study presents a different problem—and it is to this category that the majority of our Church members belong. It could at one time be assumed that within the circle of Church members the meaning of our religious, if not our theological, vocabulary was familiar and

the language of the Bible, even in the Authorised Version, could easily be understood. A recent book entitled *Puzzled People* gives an account of mass observation of the religious outlook of a typical suburban area to-day. It states that " comments by Church members on the main Christian doctrines are so confused and infantile that ministers may well wonder whether there is any knowledge at all that they dare presume even among regular worshippers." Little can be taken for granted. Acquaintance with the Bible is astonishingly meagre. The Shorter Catechism, which used to be a household book, is virtually unknown. It is only too easy for the preacher to believe that words have been understood by his audience because their meaning is familiar to himself while, in point of fact, his vocabulary is far beyond their grasp. Like the writer to the Hebrews—for this is not a modern problem only—he may have much to say which is hard to explain to people who have become dull of hearing. They ought to be teachers, but they need someone to teach them again the first principles of God's word. They need milk; not solid food (*Hebrews* 5.11ff).

Are these principles to be conveyed simply by the right choice of words? Can the distance which so often separates minister and congregation be bridged by attention to vocabulary alone? If by this we mean simply that the minister is to eliminate from his sermons every expression which his hearers may not understand, the answer must surely be No! It is, of course, self-evident that purely technical phrases and words that belong to the narrower range of strictly theological discussion are to be avoided—advice frequently given but not always accepted even by those who make little pretension to technical scholarship. Yet elimination is not enough. We may wisely drop phrases and words like effectual calling, justification by faith, regeneration or sanctification, but where is the process to end? Can we discard words like faith, and hope and love; grace and truth and power; evil and guilt? Must we cease to speak of the forgiveness of sins and the life everlasting? In that way our message will have finally no content or significance at all and will be indistinguishable from the most commonplace platitudes. It is surely wiser to recognise the fact that because the Christian message is unique it must be expressed in a vocabulary of its own. The

" new words " as Dr. Glover described them, which came into the world with Christ are inseparable from the Church's trust in Him. " There are great and universal words, with meaning stamped upon them by centuries of Christian experience; which have no equivalents in modern speech and can never be discarded." Thus the authors of *Into all the World* qualify their insistence on " Speaking as people speak " (p. 50).

This is not a situation with which we are unfamiliar in other spheres of life. We all have some knowledge of certain techical terms. No one, for example, can talk for long about radio without mentioning *wave-length.* If we wish to understand how a steam engine or a motor car or an aeroplane works, we must acquaint ourselves with such words as *cylinder*, *ignition*, *jet propulsion*, and the like. Wherever people are sufficiently interested, unfamiliarity of language is no insuperable difficulty. We may not understand the running commentary on a baseball match or a talk on atomic energy, because we have not tried to learn the appropriate terminology. But the tractor-ploughman has mastered a new vocabulary with comparative ease. The political enthusiast can talk glibly in the most technical fashion. In every department of knowledge there are words which no simplification can eliminate and for which no substitute can be provided. If we are in earnest about our Christian witness, words should not be allowed to stand in our way. The teacher of religion should be able to count, within the circle of Church membership, on a readiness to make a serious effort to understand the terms in which alone Christian experience can be expressed—while he himself must be prepared not merely to avoid over-technical phraseology but to educate his audience in the meaning of the great words of Christian faith.

There are indeed signs that such a process of education is both welcome and profitable. Discussion groups, the peacetime counterparts of the Padre's Hour, are widespread. Attendance on serious expositions of the faith is not discouraging. Radio audiences for religious talks are said to be surprisingly large. The sale of Christian literature is well maintained. Writers like Mr. C. S. Lewis and Miss Dorothy Sayers, who seek to bridge the gulf between the " theological "

and the " popular " points of view, command a wide constituency. We may never return to the old " catechetical method " of teaching Christian truth, but the casual and haphazard methods of much that has passed for religious education will no longer serve. Our Universities and Training Colleges have recognised the need for definite instruction by initiating classes of Biblical Study and strengthening the staffs engaged in religious education. The Church should be no less alive to its own opportunities. Bible Classes and discussion groups, as well as meetings for the preparation of new communicants, may well be used for instruction in the meaning of the great words which embody Christian truths. The possibilities of " adult education " beyond the stage of the new communicants' class might well be more fully explored. Sermons should instruct, as well as inspire, and instruct in a systematic manner if they are to be effective in informing the Church membership of the meaning and implications of our faith. " What we need," said a business man keenly interested in the Church, " is the knowledge with which to meet people with whom we come into contact and show them the bearing of Christian principles on their problems." For this most important task it is not enough to discard words that seem too difficult. We must essay the harder, but more rewarding, enterprise of elucidating their meaning so that they may come alive again and take their place in the daily conversation and intercourse of our common life.

Our discussion of the use of words within the circle of Church membership has led, as it inevitably must, to the question of how our evangelism is to present its message to the increasing number of people for whom its conventional vocabulary is meaningless. The missionary overseas has long been acquainted with this problem. For him difficulties of language have been added to difficulties of meaning. Only expert linguists can easily carry on fluent conversation in a foreign tongue. Elementary mistakes can often lead to quaint and even ludicrous misunderstandings. Interpreters, with their trade in words, can help out tongue-tied folk with only limited success. Not only are the ideas to be expressed in evangelism unfamiliar to the audience but the vernacular in which they must be communicated is a difficult medium for

the evangelist. Most significant of all is the problem of illiteracy and the consequent emphasis of modern missionary effort on the use of words as an essential medium of communicating truth. " In India, Africa, China and the Middle East," says a recent study of this question, " where the great blocks of illiterates live, they are a drag on the cultural, economic and religious development of their countries " (Cecil Northcott: World Mission Pamphlets; *Let the People Read*). That is why in missionary enterprise education and evangelism have gone hand in hand, and the World Missionary Councils have stressed the need of a teaching as well as a preaching ministry. The same concern lies behind the work of Dr. Frank Laubach and his great literacy campaigns. The question of words is clearly all important for the missionary as evangelist. " Until he can talk with one who does not know English in such a way that all sense of strangeness disappears and neither notices the words used but only thinks of the message conveyed, he has between him and his hearer something which insulates the hearer from the spiritual current which his own faith is sending out " (G. E. Phillips, *The Gospel in the World*, p. 98).

The situation in our own country, it is sometimes said, is now comparable to that which confronts the missionary overseas. The comparison is inexact, since the influence of our Christian heritage still operates, even in the midst of prevailing indifference. The evangelist at home, therefore, faces a different kind of problem, but one which is not necessarily less difficult. Instead of the attraction of novelty there is the handicap of quasi-familiarity and an initial prejudice due to misunderstanding and even hostility. Instead of a new language and a fresh vocabulary there is the irritating effect of words which ought to be understood and yet remain unintelligible. Just as differences of accent or pronunciation, of technical terms or idiomatic phrases, cause special difficulties even for people who speak the same language, so differences in ideas and outlook create a barrier that is hard to overcome. Instead of drawing closer together in mutual understanding we can easily drift apart into the kind of alienation that separates the man in the pulpit from the man in the street—both speaking the same language but failing to understand one another.

Many of our contemporaries state quite frankly that they no longer read their Bibles because they do not understand the meaning of the book. They have ceased to go to Church because they cannot make anything of what the minister is trying to say. They shut off the radio when a sermon begins because they are quite sure that the preacher's words will convey nothing to them. They are convinced that the business of theology is to deal with truths remote from common life. They do not expect its conclusions to be stated in language that the plain man will comprehend. The suggestion of a great theologian that he must explain himself not to scholars but to ordinary people and that " religious thinking ought to face the ordinary religious life; and ought, as far as possible, to be expressed in ordinary language " (Oman, *Vision and Authority*, p. 10) would sound strange in their ears.

After making all allowances for misunderstanding and exaggeration the fact remains, and must be faced, that in the minds of many people outside the Church religion is regarded merely as a question of words—and words which have no meaning or importance for the daily affairs of life or for the interests either of the individual or of society in general. For this misconception there may be many reasons—but more important than enquiring into its origin is the attempt to overcome its serious consequences. If the conventional vocabulary of religion is thus meaningless to the modern mind, ways must be sought of making clear the significance of the ideas it expresses and of finding terminology which is familiar and easily understood and which can at the same time provide at least an avenue of approach to the truths which we wish to expound. It would seem that we must not only discard technicalities and be prepared carefully to teach the meaning of the great terms of our faith, but that we must also explore the range of language which is in fact intelligible to our audience with a view to selecting words and phrases that provide a common ground of contact.

The gap which separates those within the Church, and particularly the Christian ministry, from the " outsider " now operates, as it were, in reverse. The man in the street may not understand the man in the pulpit, but the man in the pulpit too often does not know the language of the man in

the street. It was remarked of a recent "Commando" campaign that some of those who took part learned more of life in visiting public houses and dance halls than they had ever done before—and learned how little our stereotyped phraseology means to their unfamiliar audiences. The same experience in a different setting has been reported by Chaplains to the Forces and in Industry. It is not enough to go where people are. It is necessary to speak as people speak—and yet to speak in such a way as to open a line of advance to speech in another accent that is meantime strange and unfamiliar. Nor is this undertaking, once its implications have been grasped, so impossible as it may at first sight seem to be. If new ideas put forward by Darwin or Marx, Nietzsche or Jung or Freud, can be so stated as to influence the lives of many for whom their technicalities remain quite obscure, the Christian way of life can still be presented—as it has been in the past—with no less compelling power.

It has been said that "every wrong attitude to life, and every mistaken attempt to solve its problems, may be shown to derive in the end from some false view of the status of man," and that "nothing is more important for the world of to-day than a recovery of the true Christian doctrine of man" (*God's Will for Church and Nation*, p. 29). The Christian anthropology cannot easily be presented to the modern world in its traditional form of man as created *ad imaginem et similitudinem dei*. The ambiguity of the word "image" is enough to conceal the truth. But if we ask what, in fact, is the truth about ourselves, we find that we are immediately in touch with vital contemporary controversies. Is man a highly developed animal, and no more? Is he a complicated piece of apparatus taking his proper place in a mechanised society—his function: not to waste the time of the machine? Is he an economic unit whose highest welfare can be worked out in the blue-prints of political and social planning? Is the value of his life determined by his inheritance of blood and soil? It may well be that only by contrast with such answers, familiar to the modern mind, can the unfamiliar answer of the Shorter Catechism be stated afresh and the Biblical teaching about man's nature cogently declared.

If we thus wish to show the true life of mankind we must

have in mind not only the early chapters of Genesis but the life of our Lord Jesus Christ. Nothing could be less easily understood outside the circle of the Christian faith than the theological term Incarnation, or its New Testament equivalent of being made flesh. Yet the modern man is already well aware of the significance of great events. Nothing could be more evident to him than the far reaching effect of great happenings like the discovery of the American continent, the French Revolution, the triumph of Lenin or the overthrow of the Hitler regime. For Christian faith the Incarnation is an event in history—different indeed from other historical events in its finality and its unique significance as God's intervention in the world order, but always historical. As Dr. Emil Brunner has put it in *Reason and Revelation* (p. 236) : "The Incarnation is revelation radically understood. The history of religion, it is true, reports other 'incarnations'; but it is obvious to anyone that they all differ from the Christian Incarnation . . . In these 'incarnations' no stress is, or can be, laid upon the historicity of the *Incarnatus*." If we can persuade people who know quite well that history is not meaningless to think of Christ's life not in terms of some vague metaphysic which must remain unintelligible but as the happening which has changed the course of history, we may have secured a preliminary hearing for the gospel.

If we turn from the social implications of Christian anthropology or the historic fact of the incarnation to questions of conduct and morality we find ourselves in a less difficult situation. The basic Christian virtues are still recognised in our Western civilisation, though they may not be practised as widely as we wish. The difference between our standards and those of Russia, with its lack both of the Western traditions and of the Christian background, is the source of a dangerous misunderstanding that illustrates the point. Ethical terms have no consistent meaning in East and West alike—and the fact points to a real danger to our own way of life; of allowing our moral standards to be dissociated from the Christian teaching on which their strength depends. Meantime there is an opportunity of speaking in plain terms about familiar questions. What is our personal code of conduct? How do we regard the claims of others upon our time and

strength and gifts? What incentive will secure our individual contribution to interests of our social structure? To what are we giving top priority amid the competing claims with which we have to deal? These are questions that everyone can understand, yet in the answering of them there will manifestly be opportunity to show the failure of our own best efforts to set right the wrongs of our social, industrial and international affairs; and to plead with men to accept the uncompromising demands of Christ and find the strength that He alone supplies.

From these examples of approaches in evangelism which employ words and phrases recognisable by the ordinary man and endeavour to advance from them to the explanation and definition of religious terminology, two principles seem to emerge. In the first place, it is desirable to secure some reference, outside the normal range of religious experience, to serve as a point of contact. This may be found in some economic or social problem, some historical situation or scientific process, some typical " human situation." " When Jesus was teaching the plain men of His time He constantly used parables and similes, chiefly drawn from the life of the agricultural worker. There is a need in these days for the use of illustrations from common experience in the modern world " (Canon Marcus Knight, *Religion and Language* in *The Spectator*, October 17th, 1947). The effective use of such illustrations involves the study of the average man's range of vocabulary and the selection of the words by which they may most suitably be expressed.

Secondly, and no less important, is the fact that the distinctiveness of Christian teaching must be clearly brought out. Contemporary anthropologies may provide points of contact, but criticism of their inadequacy must accompany recognition of their partial truth. Our emphasis on the Incarnation as historical must not be allowed to conceal the fundamental contrast between this supreme event and any other happening. The Christian ethic must be distinguished from the moral teaching of secular humanism by emphasis alike on its theological basis and on its dynamic enthusiasm. Every analogy, we must remember, will be to some degree misleading as well as helpful. The words we borrow from the vocabulary of

everyday talk will not, in the end, give us the accuracy of definition or the depth of meaning we require.

The evangelist at home in the modern situation seems, therefore, to be presented with a problem comparable to that of the missionary overseas, yet with a different emphasis. His colleague abroad will use existing practices and beliefs as far as he may in the service of Christian faith, yet in the using of them he will inevitably modify and change their meaning. He will take familiar words and give them new significance. He must act on the principle that, in Brunner's phrase, Christianity is not only the fulfilment of all other faiths, but a judgment upon them; or, as Kraemer puts it, that " points of contact in the real deep sense of the word can only be found by antithesis " (*The Christian Message in a non-Christian World*, p. 139). The evangelist in our own land must similarly realise that there is a contrast, different, but no less real, between non-Christian and Christian ideas and ways of thought. Neither a wholesale transference of vocabulary—if that were possible—nor the adaptation of individual words to a new use is enough. There must be no blurring of the issues, no concealment of the vital contrast between Christian and non-Christian language and ways of life.

Our final safeguard here as elsewhere is the Christocentric emphasis of the Gospel, and the consecration of the evangelist himself. To quote Kraemer again in an impressive passage, " The strategic and absolutely dominant point in this whole important problem . . . is the missionary worker himself . . . The way to live up to this rule is to have an untiring and genuine interest in the religion, the ideas, the sentiments, the institutions—in short, in the whole range of the life of the people among whom one works, *for Christ's sake and for the sake of these people.* Whoever disobeys this rule does not find any real point of contact. Whoever obeys it becomes one with his environment, and has and finds contacts " (*Op. cit.* p. 140).

A question of words cannot be substituted for the question of consecrated evangelism, which has Christ and His claims in the centre of all its endeavour. Unfamiliar words become easy to understand when we associate them with something familiar. A wave-length has to do with a wireless set; an accelerator with a motor-car; nationalisation with a political

programme; pre-fabricated with a type of building; hydro-electric with the pylons that stretch across the moor. Yet our closest associations are not with machines or programmes or schemes or systems but with people. All Christian words are linked with Christ. We dare not run the risk of trying to explain the words we use—even the simplest, like faith and hope and love—as though they could be understood apart from the one Person who gives them meaning. What begins as a question of words must not end there. It is not merely a matter of selecting the appropriate language in which to gain contact with the non-Christian mind. The language we employ can be truly effective only on the lips of those who can, in their lives, translate the life of Christ—His interest and concern for all mankind—into the language of action which all can understand.

THE PROBLEM OF COMMUNICATION[1]

by The Rt. Rev. BISHOP STEPHEN C. NEILL

For a considerable time the services of most missionaries of the larger British Societies have been engaged in institutional and administrative work, and comparatively few of them have had wide experience as evangelists among simple people. The work of direct contact with non-Christians has either been left to indigenous evangelists who tend not to be able to stand far enough back from their work to give a reasoned account of it, or to the missionaries of small pioneer Societies, a majority of whom, though admirable and successful evangelists, lack deep theological knowledge, and are not able to establish a rationale of the work which they themselves have been carrying out. The situation is very different with continental Societies. It has been known for some time that a number of very able and theologically well-trained Dutch and German missionaries have been serving as evangelists among some of the most primitive peoples in the world, and that their results have been such as to raise many important

[1] Hans Schärer: *Die Missionarische Verkündigung auf dem Missionfeld:* Basel 1946. 6s. 6d.

questions of method, which are of interest to all those concerned with the Christian missionary enterprise. Unfortunately, almost all their works have been written in Dutch or German, and are therefore much less widely accessible in the Christian world than could be desired.

The book under review is a very good specimen of the type of missionary study produced by these continental scholars. The writer worked from 1932 till 1939 in a remote station in Southern Borneo. Letters arrived once in three weeks, and provisions once in two months, as the flow of the river Katingan permitted. Previous to Pastor Schärer's taking up work, other missionaries had laboured for sixteen years without any success among the Dyak population. During the seven years of his work, five hundred Dyaks were added to the Church. He can claim, therefore, though he himself would probably repudiate the term, to have been a successful evangelist, and his statement of the methods followed in his work is deserving of the closest attention.

He first discusses the relationship of the missionary to those whom he seeks to win. He rightly emphasises the truth that the missionary must repudiate completely any idea of coming as the representative of a higher civilisation to those who are waiting in darkness for him to put them right and lead them to a better way. He must set the highest value on the human material entrusted to his spiritual care, and treat with respect and sympathetic understanding the whole of their philosophy of life and complex of customs, even when these most need to be changed by the Gospel. He must realise that to the Dyak his own system of thought is sacred and right, and that the missionary comes as a destroyer. The free Dyak has a very high sense indeed of his dignity and importance in the world; he is the upholder of the right and good order appointed by the gods, and, when that order is menaced or overtrodden, it is he who by the appointed means, which include ritual head-hunting, is able to restore the broken order of the universe. The Dutch Government, by forbidding head-hunting and other indispensable parts of the world order, has seriously dislocated the whole system of Dyak life; the missionary is from the start under suspicion as a further emissary of dislocation and disorder. The missionary

can enter into the confidence of the people only as he shows himself willing to treat them and their whole system of thought with respect.

At the same time, he has to bear in mind that the Dyak system of thought, however strange it may seem to the European, is one integrated whole, and that it derives ultimately from the conception of God and of the divine nature. To the European the term *primitive*, so often applied to these races, suggests the idea of *simple:* but simplicity is the last thing that can be looked for or expected in the mind of a primitive people. Their thoughts and practices are of immense complexity, yet all woven together in one single whole, in the light of certain dominant ideas, without an understanding of which the lines of the world picture of primitive man cannot be understood. The work of a missionary therefore is the confrontation of the total Dyak world-picture with the total Christian world-picture. Only so can the Christian idea of God and the world replace the Dyak picture from within, and recreate the whole mind of those who receive it. It is possible for the Christian conception to be, to some extent, imposed from without on a primitive or non-Christian world of ideas. The results that follow in the experience of the tribe or race can be easily understood in the light of what modern psychology has revealed about mental confusion in the individual. What has not been faced openly and overcome is repressed and driven down into the sub-conscious; it there continues an independent and active life, rebellious against, and often destructive of, the conscious life of the individual, uncontrollable in its manifestations because these are welling up from hidden sources of which the individual himself is now unconscious. I believe that what happens to an individual can also happen to a tribe or people. If this is true, it would provide an explanation for the apparently uncontrollable persistence of sorcery and witchcraft among African peoples which have accepted Christianity. This phenomenon is extremely perplexing to those who have the care of the Christians, and sometimes to the Christians themselves; they are well aware that by becoming Christians they have rejected all such ideas and practices, and yet find themselves held by a compulsion which they can neither control nor resist to

continue in practices of which their own conscience disapproves. The unsympathetic observer will be inclined to suggest that there is no sincerity at all in their Christianity. This would be a shallow judgment. There is an obvious and real sincerity or piety on the conscious level; it is the subconscious or unconscious which denies the reality of the faith; its dominance, if we are right in our diagnosis, is due to the initial failure of the Christian teachers to make sure that the whole of primitive man's concept of the world and God was brought into direct contact with the whole of the Christian conception of God and the world.

Pastor Schärer gives a fascinating account of the way in which he carried on evangelism by means of conversation—long discussions in the evenings in Dyak villages, where men would gather round, willing to sit for long hours, and both themselves to discourse on their own traditions and viewpoint, and to hear the missionary speak of his. It is not to be supposed that the long conversation given in this book took place exactly as it is recorded; it may be taken rather as a distillation of many such conversations, ranging over many subjects, as the missionary gradually became more fully aware of the thoughts of the people, and more fully in command of their language. At many points, as the missionary sets forth the Christian views, he is met with the reply "we have the same in our religion." The business of the missionary then is to show that what is being offered in Christ is not the same as that which exists in the religion of his hearers, but that it is radically different, and that it includes God's judgment on all that they have valued and regarded as most important. For instance, to the Dyak head-hunting and the ritual connected with the captured head is a form of atoning sacrifice when the right world order has been in some way grievously violated. It is the task of the missionary to point out that whereas this sacrifice is only symbolic and really ineffective, God in Christ has provided the sacrifice which once for all restores the world order. The very fact that the head-hunting sacrifice has to be often performed shows that it has no real validity as a restoration of the damaged order.

For the most part the presentation of the Christian faith as put forth by Pastor Schärer belongs to the strict tradition

of Christian orthodoxy. The evangelist is a herald; his task is to proclaim what God has actually done, the presence of the reality of the Kingdom of God and the imminence of its revelation in majesty and power. The missionary must understand the minds of his people, or he cannot speak to them effectively; but he is not looking for points of contact to which he can attach the Gospel. Pastor Schärer directly repudiates the view that the missionary seeks to discover and to make plain to the hearers their existing religious needs, and then to point out to them that these needs are met in Christ. It is Christ Himself who creates the needs which He satisfies, and the gift which He makes for the satisfaction of men's real needs is radically different from anything which they could have imagined or desired for themselves. Man's religion is always a projection on to the sky of his own thoughts, hopes, conflicts, and desires. The revelation of God in Jesus Christ is God's decisive *No* to every imagination of man, and the introduction from without of something wholly different from human thought and purpose.

This being so, it is the task of the missionary to be at all times a witness to the word of truth revealed by God, and to recognise that this is the utmost that he can do. He does not seek to secure intellectual agreement on the part of his hearers; if he is successful in securing this, he will merely introduce them to another set of human ideas, and that is not to introduce them to the Gospel of Christ. He must recognise that the work of conversion is always the direct act of the Holy Spirit; and that though the human proclamation may prepare the way, ultimately the work is wholly the work of God. To this every missionary, indeed every preacher of the Gospel, must whole-heartedly agree. In the phenomenon of conversion there is always that divine creative act, that mystery beyond the limits of any human analysis which marks the continuing creative activity of God in His World.

It seems to me, however, that Pastor Schärer rather underestimates the part which the missionary, and particularly the witness of his life itself, plays in carrying out the work of God. He does refer to the value of medical and educational work, but does not seem to see clearly their relevance to the work of conversion. The word of God is conveyed in life

and act, as well as by proclamation, to an extent which Pastor Schärer does not seem to admit. This, however, is not a matter of speculation, but of actual analysable experience. Innumerable converts from many faiths have borne witness that what led directly to their conversion was some act on the part of a Christian, either by way of unexpected kindness or by avoidance of justifiable revenge or in some other way, which brought it home to them suddenly that these Christians do really act in a way quite different from anyone else, and that therefore they are telling the truth when they say that their religion is wholly different from any other. Pastor Schärer is so honest a witness that his own record tells against his theological construction, and gives evidence that on the Katingan river as elsewhere it was not simply the word proclaimed but also the word lived which produced its effects in the heart of the Dyak; and though we shall fully agree that the work of those conversions is a direct activity of the Holy Spirit, and that it cannot take place without the clear proclamation of the word as a message direct from God, yet the reflection of the living Christ in the life of the witness, and particularly the manifestation of Christ in the wholly different life of His Body the Church, is of such importance that it must be classed along with the proclamation of the Word in speech as a living proclamation of the Word of God in life.

After some time of earnest preaching, converts began to come in on the Katingan river. The question of what should be done with them then began to arise. On this subject there is considerable debate among continental missionaries. One school of thought holds that no one should be baptised until the whole, or almost the whole of the group is prepared to take the step of baptism. Otherwise, it is feared that the old solidarity will be broken up, the Christians will be detached from their roots in society, and the difficulty of building up a natural Christian tradition among the people will be very greatly increased. The other view is that as God calls out individuals from the mass, they should be baptised and brought together in the gathered Church of God's elect people. It is clear that neither policy is free from danger. If a whole community becomes Christian, it tends to bring with it the

whole pattern of its pre-Christian life, and in that there are bound to be a great many elements which are recalcitrant to the Gospel. On the other hand, if individuals are brought in, their very separation from the life of their past tends both to weaken them, and to make them less effective as witnesses to the non-Christians.

Pastor Schärer took the line of baptising his converts as they were ready, and forming small Christian groups within each non-Christian community. But again his scrupulous honesty makes him tell frankly the difficulties that arose from following this policy. The newly converted Dyak has a tendency to react most violently against his non-Christian past, to condemn everything that reminds him of that past, and to wish to imitate as closely as possible the missionary through whom the Gospel has come to him. We are told that when one of the missionaries built a Church more or less on the lines of a native Dyak house, the Christians refused to use it on the ground that it savoured far too much of heathenism, and did not give them the atmosphere of their new-found faith. Exactly the same phenomenon has been found in many other countries. In India most of the enthusiasts for Indianisation in Church architecture and worship are missionaries; the majority of Indian Christians remain conservatively attached to the more Western forms introduced by the early pioneers. It must be recognised that only the convert can judge how far it is safe and wise for him to continue to use elements from his non-Christian past; he alone knows how utterly steeped that past has been in the devilish and unclean, and how things perfectly innocent in themselves may remind him of evil and draw him back towards it. Nevertheless, there is undoubtedly a tendency for converts to repudiate a great deal which in itself is harmless and might well be kept, and so both to impoverish their life, and to alienate themselves unnecessarily from their own people.

Another point to which attention is drawn by Pastor Schärer is the tendency of converts constantly to come to the missionary to ask for rulings and instruction on all kinds of things. The old life was full of rules and regulations about minute details of every-day life; the convert not unnaturally expects that his new Christian life will be subject to the same

kind of regulation, and, that just as the priest in the old days was the interpreter of the law, so the new priest, the missionary, will have a ruling to give on every subject. This tendency to dependence makes it very easy for the Christians to metamorphose the Gospel into a new law, and so merely to pass from one scheme of human domination to another. It makes it very difficult to build them up into that liberty of direct dependence on the Spirit of God, which is the hallmark of genuine Christian life.

Pastor Schärer states frankly that difficulties of this kind have not yet been solved, and calls upon the theologians of Europe to consider these missionary problems in the light of the Gospel, and to help in their solution. In this he is right. The theology of the West has suffered grievously from the unfamiliarity of most theologians with the working of the Gospel in situations far more closely akin to New Testament times than those of western and quasi-Christian countries. The work of missionaries has suffered through not being guided and controlled by real theological understanding.

But Pastor Schärer does not seem to be aware that some at least of the problems of his work arise from his own peculiar theological construction. He believes that the Gospel which he preached to the Dyaks was the pure Word of God as it is to be found in the Scriptures. In point of fact, of course, we none of us preach the absolutely pure Word of God; it always comes with that element of personal and traditional distortion from which we cannot free ourselves. It is clear to the reader that the Gospel as preached by Pastor Schärer, biblical as it is in its quality, is yet affected by a type of German scholasticism unfamiliar and not very congenial to the British mind. His many quotations from Kittel's *Wörterbuch* indicate one of the strong influences in the formation of his theological outlook. He is deeply engaged in the theological battle over *Anknüpfungspunkte*, theological points of contact in the human mind with the Word of God, and would of course come down on the negative side in that controversy. But biblical scholasticism, whether that of Thomas Aquinas or that of Karl Barth, is always narrower than biblical theology. The message of the Bible has the fullness of life and of poetry; in any theological construction there is a loss of the element of life and power.

I believe that the answer to many of Pastor Schärer's problems is to be found by a return to a more genuinely biblical theology, in which justice will be done to all the elements of the Gospel, and not only to certain elements of its uniqueness.

Let us take first the question of the education of the Christian convert. There is a Christian freedom, yet it is absolutely necessary to take seriously Paul's statement that he was *under the law to Christ* (1 *Cor.* 9.21). It is no more necessary for every single Christian to discover by the direct guidance of the Holy Spirit every single aspect of Christian life, obligation, and conduct, than it is necessary for every mathematical student to discover for himself the proof of the theorem of Pythagoras. There has been a Christian tradition over the last nineteen centuries. Mere tradition cannot give light, yet the strivings and experiences of past generations have not been in vain; there is a living experience of faith which connects us with the times of the New Testament, and a Christian Law. There is, for example, an obligation on the Christian to join in public worship on the first day of the week, and in particular to be regular in participating in the commemoration of the death of Christ in the Lord's Supper. Now on the one hand we must recognise the perennial tendency of Christians to turn the Gospel into a new law, of which we have such ample evidence in the Christian writings of the sub-apostolic age. On the other hand, we must avoid being drawn away into wholly unprofitable controversies on the *Tertius Usus Legis*, and other technical terms of controversial theology. The Christian law is merely an analysis of the nature of love. It is not imposed from without, it depends on no penal sanctions. It guides the Christian in the detailed fulfilment of that which in principle he has taken upon himself, the following of Christ, and saves him from the necessity of working out by individual effort much that is already contained in Scripture, or absolutely guaranteed as necessary by the experience of Christians throughout the centuries. This does not deny the right of Christians to criticise tradition, as Luther did, in the light of their own understanding of the word of God. It does not deny that vast area of Christian liberty where the Christian is personally responsible to God alone for his actions, and where his choice is unfettered except by his duty to God

under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. But it does recognise the fact that there is no such thing as individual salvation, that the Church is an original part of the Gospel, that the fulfilment of the two great commandments of Christ is one and inseparable, and that the Holy Spirit works in us not in isolation but because we are members of the fellowship of the Body of Christ.

Let us turn now to the other problem of the Dyak who has become a Christian, and yet, as Pastor Schärer so clearly says, must not cease to be a Dyak. In this problem we can see our way only if we are willing to accept the amplitude of biblical theology as it is found in the Bible itself, that theology which tells us of a true light that lighteneth every man by its coming into the world, that tells us of a God who hath not left Himself without witness, of a God in whose sight everyone that calleth on Him and worketh rightousness, is acceptable, of a God who holds the nations in the hollow of his hand.

The paradox of the situation of the convert is that by becoming a Christian he has ceased to be a Dyak, but that in order to be a Christian he must continue to be a Dyak.

The theological solution of this paradox is to be found only in the understanding of the mystery of the Virgin Birth. The problem of man's salvation is that he must be saved from within mankind, otherwise the salvation will be artificial and imposed from without; and that he cannot be saved from within mankind, because mankind is sinful through and through, and therefore salvation is impossible. The Virgin Birth of Christ is the sign and assurance that in God's wonderful provision for the salvation of man, there is both continuity and discontinuity, and that it is the holding together of these apparent contradictions in one incredibly wonderful divine activity that makes salvation real. There is a literal human birth, so that Christ is bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh; there is also the divine creative act, by which a new beginning is made, and Christ is qualified to be the last Adam, the Head of the new people of God. There are those who regard the Virgin Birth as only symbolic. But others would hold that a symbol which is merely a symbol is quite ineffective, and that it is because the Virgin Birth was an actual historic fact that the salvation wrought in Christ is both rooted in the

groundwork of humanity as it is, and also wholly the manifestation of the new-creating power of God.

This paradox of complete discontinuity, and yet of a real continuity of being, is familiar in any experience of conversion. I have the immense advantage of having been definitely converted, and therefore can speak from inner experience of this mystery. I have not the smallest doubt that through conversion I became a new man in Christ, and that it was literally true that all things became new through Him. And yet I remained distressingly myself. The completely ungovernable temper which was the nightmare of my boyhood, remained, though now in an entirely different way under control, as a part of my make-up, as a recurring problem, and as something that has to be watched over even now, though I find that one advantage of being a Bishop is that even Presbyterians tend to be much less provoking to Bishops than they might be to other people! The old has become new, and yet it is the old which has become new, and not something else which has taken the place of the old.

We can find the same paradox at work in the fulfilment of the law by Jesus Christ. In one sense by fulfilling the law, Jesus abrogated it—we are no longer circumcised. And yet Christianity would be entirely different from what it is, if there had been no Jewish law before it; Jesus Christ by fulfilling the law recognised an element of permanent validity in it, grounded His work upon it, and by incorporating much of it into His own message, give it new life transformed and transfigured within the living word of God.

It is from this paradoxical angle of old and new that we must approach the problem of the conversion of non-Christian peoples. We must be prepared to accept the fact that God has been striving with them, even in their time of alienation from Himself. We must recognise the fact that in all, in however rudimentary a form, there is a sense of right and wrong. We must recognise that primitive societies, however much there may be in their organisation that Christianity must condemn and change, have held together as societies, that societies only hold together by that which is good in their system, the evil being a source of disintegration that, if unchecked, will overthrow the society; that order is the Will of

God, and that though He passes sentence of condemnation on human independence and every attempt of manhood to live apart from God, yet even in the society of the Dyaks there are those elements which are according to His Will, and which, with however strange a transformation and transfiguration, can be built in as the foundation of the Dyak Christian community, much as Old Testament Law, though very much of it is now underground and out of sight, was built in as the foundation of the new community of the Messiah.

It has seemed worthwhile to make this lengthy review of a German book of less than one hundred pages, because it does raise so many questions which are to the fore in missionary studies and in discussion in theological circles. Pastor Schärer is right in believing that the solution of all practical problems is to be found only by recourse to a deeper theological understanding. This is the message of the Apostle Paul. He cannot answer a simple question of the weekly collections in the Church at Corinth without going back to the fundamental principle of the incarnation. He cannot deal with the quarrels of two pious women in Philippi without recourse to a magnificent exposition of the mind of Christ. It may be that many readers will not agree with the statement of the theological problem contained in this article, or with the suggestions made as to the right biblical approach to the problem. But advance towards truth comes often from honest disagreement; if we agree that there is a problem, and disagree as to the method of approach, there is always the possibility that the Holy Spirit will lead us to such deeper apprehensions of truth as will preserve all the valid insights of those who at the start believe themselves to be in radical disagreement.

BOOK REVIEWS

Pascal: Genius in the Light of Scripture. By Emile Caillet. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press. pp. 383. $3.75.

To-day, especially in theological circles, a new interest is discernible in Pascal and his thought. At the turn of the century his interpreters most congenial to Britain were probably Vinet, the Swiss Protestant, and Laberthonnière, the French Catholic. There was a reason for this. The prevailing climate of thought made it almost inevitable that Pascal should be read and understood selectively. It was Pascal the Christian layman, Pascal exposing the Jesuits, Pascal the evangelical mystic, Pascal with the *impérieux besoin du vrai*,[1] Pascal the unconscious Protestant fighting authoritarian religion—it was this edited Pascal, for the most part, who fascinated. Thus his vindication of miracle and of the doctrine of Original Sin was not considered important and was rarely seen as part—and integral part, at that—of his larger endeavour to present to his age a non-scholastic, Biblical type of theology. Oman's fine essay on Pascal in his book, *The Problem of Faith and Freedom*—and Oman appears to have been decisively influenced by Pascal—suffers from this kind of selectiveness. The modern theologian may be tempted to be selective in another way and to seek to grasp Pascal by the aid of Kierkegaard and that general movement in philosophical and religious thinking which we call existential. He ought, however, to be saved from any gross mishandling of Pascal by the fact that half-a-century of the most painstaking scholarship has now made a balanced estimate more easy to form. Our own intense pre-occupation with the problems with which Pascal wrestled, such as the nature of man, the source of authority in religion, the hiddenness of God, the relation between faith and reason, ought to help rather than hinder appreciation of the positive results he reached. The Pascal literature of France is immense in its extent and is likely to continue to grow. If we cite the names of Brunschvieg, Boutroux, Chevalier, Jovy, Strowski, Dedieu, Tourneur, we but mention the more distinguished of a large company of *pascalisants*. Something of the wealth of this writing as of the heavy debt which French thought in general owes to Pascal has been sensitively and brilliantly conveyed in *The Revival of Pascal*, the legacy of Dorothy Eastwood, a sufferer akin in spirit to Pascal himself. For more than thirty years Dr. H. F.

[1] Vinet, *Études sur Blaise Pascal*, p. 297.

Stewart of Cambridge has been interpreting Pascal to British readers from his own independent standpoint and with full knowledge of what has been done in France. The new edition of the *Pensées* which he is preparing in English will enable British readers not familiar with French to see from the arrangement of the material according to Pascal's original plan that he was something of a systematic theologian and not merely a collector of pregnant maxims. It is to be expected that the intensive work carried out on the text of Pascal, on his relation to Montaigne and Descartes, on his "Jansenism," on his study of the Bible, and, most recently, on his "apologetic method" will lead to a new concentration *on the theology of Pascal*. Already there are indications of the kind of direction which this revived interest in Pascal may give to theological thinking. Of the too few American books which have fallen into the hands of the present reviewer within the last eighteen months, Stanley Romaine Hopper's *The Crisis of Faith* and Nels Ferré's *Faith and Reason* show plain signs of a large indebtedness to Pascal, the former rather more directly than the latter. Pascal is proving a powerful ally to those who are eager to show that a Bible-centred and impenitently supernaturalist Christianity surprises but does not outrage the reason of man, if reason be understood not as a separable faculty of the personality but as the whole man gathered to the pitch and point of decisive personal quest for the ultimate. A diligent, continuous grappling with Pascal may usher in a new stage in the recurring debate about the relation between faith and reason.

And now we have a full length study of Pascal by an established Pascalian scholar who writes in exellent English out of a rich background of French thought and experience. Those who have read the author's *Clue to Pascal* will already know something of his quality. Four of the chapters in the earlier book were actually taken from the projected volume which is the present book. They are now repeated and are given added meaning by being set in the context for which Professor Cailliet originally intended them. What of the new book itself? It is to be welcomed with warm gratitude as an indispensable aid to the full comprehension of what Pascal was as man, scientist, thinker and saint. Its merits are not far to seek. Professor Cailliet's knowledge of the text of Pascal and of the much larger corpus of books about Pascal is intimate and almost exhaustive. I thought I had stumbled upon a notable omission when I failed to find any reference to the important investigation of Pascal's theological method in *Les Caractères de la Démonstration dans l'Apologie Pascalienne* by J. F. Thomas (Paris, 1942). On looking again I discovered that Professor Cailliet had

drawn attention to the book, under a slightly different title, in a footnote but had not been able to secure a copy owing to war conditions. His sure grasp of the totality of Pascal's thought enables him, for instance, to correct Vinet when Vinet scores a Protestant point for Pascal against the evidence.

> It is wishful thinking on the part of the Protestant Vinet when he writes: "Let one read the *Pensées* attentively and then answer this one question: Is not Church authority simply a digression in Pascal's system?" The context indicates that he is sure of the reader's acquiescence. How, then, does he come to this conclusion? By identifying purely and simply the heart with the Holy Spirit, according as it is a question of a "new heart with which the Holy Spirit provides us." Truly one seems to be dreaming in reading this gratuitous transposition of Pascal into Protestant language (p. 350).

Although it is not part of Professor Cailliet's purpose to provide the reader with a history of the interpretation of Pascal, the sketch at least of such a history is to be found in the numerous passages quoted from Pascalian scholars and in the comments, critical or approving, made by the writer upon these passages.

But Professor Cailliet is much more than a Pascalian scholar. He is a lover of Pascal who has gladly submitted to the spell of the great Frenchman. Fortunately he is sufficiently aware of the dangers attendant upon such devotion to be on his guard against bias and exaggeration. His self-critical enthusiasm for Pascal, wedded to an astonishing mastery of the material, leads him again and again to make illuminating judgments. This, for example, is how he describes the method of Pascal:

> The author of the *Pensées*, while he was concerned with the loftiest enquiries that can occupy the human mind, began a new type of apologetic which abandons every instrument of metaphysic and seizes you, as it were, by the lapel of your coat as a man would do in the street if he were trying to save a careless pedestrian whom he saw in danger. Pascal starts out from your situation and mine (p. 34).

His analysis of what Pascal set out to accomplish provides us with the proper perspective in which to regard the varying and sometimes apparently self-contradictory things Pascal had to say about reason.

> The inner drama in the life of Blaise Pascal consisted, on the one hand, in his repudiation of scholastic theology and the incursion of human reason into the domain of faith, and of his ambition, on the other hand, to fashion a rational theology for himself (p. 119).

In fact Pascal was protesting against the contemporary rôle cast for reason and reaching out towards the understanding of reason as a function of the total self, the whole man in his living unity.

Tracing the course of Pascal's life from the beginning, Professor Cailliet makes skilful and imaginative use of his wide knowledge to expose to our view the growth of a great soul vehemently set upon truth and love and God. On almost every issue that has agitated Pascalian scholarship he has something valuable to say. He shows how deep in the debt of the Jansenists Pascal was without being himself a Jansenist. He corrects the misleading interpretation of the Wager along the line of James' " will to believe " by restoring it to its proper setting in the *Pensées*, where Pascal's argument with the freethinker becomes a Biblical challenge, charged with prayer, to the decision of faith, a laying before him of an inescapable choice between life and death. He affirms that the shattering and exalting experience enshrined in the *Mémorial* is the real turning-point in Pascal's search for God.

> Having attained at Port-Royal, that stronghold of the Scriptures, the day after November 23, 1654, the order of charity, Pascal turns from human philosophies; his viewpoint becomes essentially evangelical, Christo-centric, and his language becomes that of a prophet or Biblical mystic (p. 177).

Most importantly, he bends all his energies throughout the book upon proving that the story of Pascal's earthly pilgrimage is the story of a Christian and a thinker more and more dominated by the Bible and its message.

This last-mentioned feature of the book is its most significant. Professor Cailliet's thesis is that Pascal's growing concentration upon the Bible is the vital clue both to the content and to the method of his thinking.

> Better than any other source, the Scripture points us to the things that are of God. It is to Scripture that we must turn in the hour of our greatest distress: *after completing the full circle of human knowledge, and having come to the end of all those resources known to human nature and to the Church, Blaise Pascal came to realise, in the hour of greatest distress, that the Word has the final word to speak concerning human destiny* (p. 124).

A great deal of minute scholarship is expended in the endeavour to substantiate this claim. Whatever attitude be adopted to the claim itself, it cannot be denied that this scholarship is rich with the most fruitful suggestions. Professor Cailliet hardly ever examines without at the same time illuminating. By starting off from the fact that the " Jansenist quickening " brought Pascal far into the world of the Bible, he has no difficulty in showing that the experience of 1654, " the second conversion," owed its form to Pascal's deep love of the Book and may actually have arisen out of an act of sustained, brooding meditation upon some part of it.

Nor is it more difficult for him to show that Pascal's plan for his *Vindication of Christianity* was so constructed as to lead naturally to Him to whom the whole of Scripture witnesses, Jesus Christ the Redeemer. So much will be readily granted. But in claiming that the *Pensées*, in which the *Vindication* is embedded, have what he calls a " Biblical structure " Professor Cailliet seems to be claiming more than this. He seems to be saying that the plan itself is in some special sense " Biblical." It is true that Pascal's order—presentation of the problem (man both great and wretched, seeking for a point of rest beyond himself), statement of the solution (the Christian religion meeting man and answering his needs), the demonstration of the solution (the Christian religion, as revealed from God, fully satisfying man)—it is true that this order may have been derived from the Jansenists, for whom the Bible was the beginning and the end of all theology. But this does not *mean* that the plan was necessarily derived from or suggested by the Bible. The method is precisely that which would present itself to a trained and logical mind like Pascal's as the most fitting for his purpose. As Thomas remarks, " Il y a démontrer et démontrer " and Pascal's " démontrer " was very near to " montrer." Nevertheless Thomas seems thoroughly justified in retaining the word " démonstration " for Pascal's vindication of the truth of Christianity. In it

> il n'abandonne pas la pensée de rester fidèle aux mêmes qualités d'observation et de démonstration dont il faisait usage quand il écrivait *l'Essai sur les coniques*, *le Traité du triangle arithmétique* ou qu'il tirait les conséquences des expériences sur la pesanteur de l'air qu'il faisait faire à son beau-frère à Clermont.[1]

The clue to the method would seem to lie rather in Pascal himself. First he describes the predicament of man. Then, when the full force of this predicament has been brought home, he triumphantly declares the inadequacy of human faiths and philosophies and the adequacy of the Christian religion. Finally he expounds the internal consistency and reasonableness of this supernatural way. It is the method of the preacher and the evangelist. Perhaps in this sense it may be called Biblical. Professor Cailliet, again, seems to be straining his evidence when he suggests that because Pascal's grasp on the Bible was becoming stronger with the years, the fragments of the *Pensées* might be capable of a chronological arrangement according to the depth of the saturation of each fragment by Biblical ideas. This is to work a hypothesis too hard. It is one thing to say that the Bible is the primary source of influence upon Pascal, quite another to make it a principle which gives

[1] *Les Caractères de la Démonstration*, etc. Thomas, p. 13.

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unity to the whole field of his thought. Professor Cailliet confesses in his Preface " that every individual point of view has its limitations " and asks the instructed reader to check every step. In defence of Professor Cailliet it must be said that there is always evidence of one kind or another for each part of his hypothesis and that he is careful to point out—to mention but a single other factor —that the tradition of the Church was only second to the Bible in shaping Pascal's mind. A Protestant commentator on Pascal may be motivated to prove that he was dominated by the Bible by an unconscious wish to draw Pascal nearer to Protestantism! Professor Cailliet sees Pascal's affinities with Protestantism without exaggerating them. He paints a vivid picture of Pascal's struggle between loyalty to his evangelical conscience and loyalty to the Roman Catholic Church. But he never allows us to forget that throughout his life and at the end Pascal was her devoted son.

Apart from the tendency to claim too much for his main thesis, there are two minor defects in Professor Cailliet's book which rather obtrude themselves on the attention of the reader. The first is that the book is overloaded with quotations. They are all quotations worth making and reveal how extraordinary is Professor Cailliet's intimacy with Pascal literature; but there are too many of them. Despite the adroitness with which they are woven into the narrative, their cumulative effect is to blunt the edge of Professor Cailliet's own very positive contribution. The other defect is the occasional lapse into quite gratuitous comment, of which the following is an example.

> Pascal knows how to keep to a strictly expository method of the Bible sufficient unto itself. To him a simple presentation of Scripture proves to be the best apologetics possible—truth with which our modern preachers would do well to imbue themselves (p. 337).

The hortatory element is quite out of place in a book like this. Even the good Homer nods. Professor Cailliet knows well that in order to allow Pascal to speak to us it is sufficient to expound him, as he himself does, with insight and lucidity. And, lest our criticism appear to be carping, let it be freely acknowledged that, apart from these minor blemishes, the exposition is done in a spirit submissive to Pascal's highest order, the order of charity.

Even if the defects of this book were larger and more numerous than those I have mentioned, they could hardly touch its solid worth. In this book Pascal comes alive as a great Christian thinker. There are many who would echo the judgment of Dr Clement Webb that Pascal is not a philosopher " because he lacked that primary interest in speculation on the ultimate structure of

reality, for the mere sake of knowing what it is, which we nowadays take to be the peculiar qualification of the philosopher, in the strict and proper sense of the word."[1] In his recent book, *Une Vie avec Pascal*, M. Tourneur gives expression to a very similar sentiment.

Je me refuse à lui décerner le tître de " penseur," de philosophe, qui me paraît ne convenir qu'à l'homme qui cherche à travers le flot incessant des expériences diverses, les relations constantes des faits, pour les convertir en règles de conduite vers la réalisation d'un avenir prospice au bonheur, le sien et lui des semblables.

Professor Cailliet would want, I am sure, to give to the words " thinker " and " philosopher " a much wider connotation. We may, in fact, mean by a philosopher one who searches tirelessly into the structure of reality in order to respond to it. By this definition Pascal was a philosopher. The difference in the two types of definition turns upon the question whether we recognise or not that the search for what is ultimate is itself prompted by some dim awareness of that ultimate. Pascal recognised this, believing that the God " qui n'est pas nous " is also the God " qui est en nous." To search with groaning was the seal upon such belief. Péguy says somewhere that a great philosophy is not a philosophy without breaches in the walls, but a philosophy with citadels. Could we not say that Pascal's philosophy is such a philosophy, a philosophy of citadels, Biblical citadels? Because Pascal is a thinker after the fashion of Paul, a thinker whom God has found, his thinking never rests in speculation or even contemplation. It passes over into proclamation, persuasion, evangelism. Because he has seen God, he wants others to see God. Although Boutroux is numbered among those who refuse to call Pascal a philosopher, he has written two sentences which accurately describe the achievement of his thought.

Pascal offrait un exemple éclatant de la possibilité de réunir et concilier la plus haute raison avec la foi la plus docile et la plus humble . . .[2]

Pascal plaça dans le christianisme, en toute sincérité, le centre de sa pensée et de sa vie.[3]

Professor Cailliet's book is almost an extended commentary on these words. It is so splendid a commentary that it is to be hoped that a British edition will be made speedily available.

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[1] *Pascal's Philosophy of Religion* p. 6.
[2] *Pascal* p. 194.
[3] Ibid. p. 193.

Die Errettung vom Tode in den individuellen Klage- und Dankliedern des Alten Testamentes. By CHRISTOPH BARTH. Evangelischer Verlag A.G. Zollikon, 1947. pp 168.

CHRISTOPH BARTH is the second son of Karl Barth and is at present (October 1947) en route for Java, where he will be a missionary professor of Old Testament in a Dutch Missionary College. *Die Errettung vom Tode* is his Inaugural Dissertation for the Doctorate of Theology of Basel.

The thesis is an investigation into what is meant by such a verse as the eighth of Psalm 116: Thou hast delivered my soul from death! " Deliverance from death " or, what is the other side of it, " restoration to life " are ideas frequently met with in the Old Testament, occurring in all sections of it. But what do the phrases exactly mean? For clearly ' death ' is not bodily death, and ' life ' means more than being alive. The writer of the 116th Psalm does not mean that he was, as we say dead and buried, and then Jahweh restored him to life again. Well, what does he mean? The words ' life ' and ' death ' which he uses are the ordinary words for ordinary life and bodily death. He must then be using them with a non-ordinary connotation: they must have a different content than their accustomed one. What that is is what Barth here seeks to discover.

He is dissatisfied with the traditional significations attached to ' life ' and ' death ' as used in such passages as the above. For, on the one hand, the Hebrew conceptions of life and death can no longer be explained, he holds, by Animism, while, on the other, it is not enough to say, as the most of the commentaries do, that ' death ' in such contexts is merely " figurative " or " imaginative " or " poetic diction." ' Death ' and ' life ' are to be interpreted " realistically." It is such an interpretation that he offers, on the basis of the occurrence of the words, and their synonyms, in the Dirges and Thanksgivings of individuals in the Old Testament.

The book is divided into three parts. The first deals with Life. It analyses the way in which the Hebrews, and the older Sumerian and Akkadian civilisations, thought about the nature and characteristics of life. " To live " includes such things as having enough time to be and to become what one is, the power to move towards a goal, the command of the means of life (food and drink) as well as of things like health, strength, security and happiness. There is then a section on the Lord of Life, in which the contrast between Akkadian and Babylonian ideas of the relations of God and Nature and those of the Old Testament are excellently brought out. Then follows a section on the Place of Life, an answer to the question,

where does one have access to the Lord of Life? The answer is, in the Temple, in the Land of Promise, and " before Jahweh."

The second part of the book deals with Death, and follows the plan adopted in the first. The characteristics of Death are the loss, or the failing or failure, of the things previously mentioned as the characteristics of Life. Parallel with this, the evidence shows that the things which made a man say that he had been in ' death ' are illness, imprisonment, oppression by enemies, sin and the like. Then, Barth says, although the Hebrews had no definite localisation of the Realm of Death—it is everywhere where Death has power—there is none the less no doubt of its *Raumlichkeit*. Indeed, he goes on, it is just the failure to recognise the Realm of Death as a real, though unlocalised, place that has put the previous interpretations of the words ' life ' and ' death ' astray. For, according to Oriental thought, which sees the whole in the part (die Denkweise des *pars pro toto*), once a man has come into the sphere of, and under the influence of, the things which belong to Death, such as illness, etc., he sees himself as already in Death itself. " He whose foot has already begun to slip has no longer any way of stopping. If a man once catches sight of the inevitable end, he is even at the beginning a lost man." Thus, because of his way of thought, which is not our way, when a Hebrew said that in illness he had been in ' death,' he was not using any figurative language, or merely poetically exaggerating, but he was expressing what had been to him literal fact. " Wer auch nur in der geringsten Beziehung in die Gewalt der Scheol gerät, befindet sich faktisch in ihrer Gewalt."

The third part of the book treats of Deliverance from Death. It is a real experience by which a man is freed from the power of the things which are characteristic of Death and given back the enjoyment of those that are characteristic of Life. Especially is it freeing from the dominion of sin—for there is a close connection between sin and ' death '—and standing, by God's grace, once again before Him as justified. He who is delivered from ' death ' sees God, having experienced His saving work upon him.

It is a valuable treatise, clearly written and competently argued. Barth acknowledges his debt to Pedersen, and claims no more for his own study than that it is part of the preparatory work which must be done before the subject of Hebrew thought on Life and Death and Life after Death as a whole can be re-examined in the light of Pedersen's book and the knowledge we now possess of the older cultures, of Sumer and Akkad and Egypt, by which the Hebrews were influenced. Even so, it is to be regretted that the present conditions will probably prevent it from becoming

readily accessible in this country. Even if the last section perhaps reads more of the Barthian theology into the Dirges and Thanksgiving Songs of the O.T. than is warranted, it is good to see men once again looking at the O.T. " theologically."

The Old Testament—Its Form and Purpose. By Lindsay B. Longacre. New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1945. pp. 264. $2.00.

The purpose of this book is to " attempt to point out some of the backgrounds and unities in the Old Testament writings." Since the days of Astruc, Longacre says in the Preface, scholarship has been concerned with the analysis of the Old Testament books. The time has now come for a synthesis of the results of the critical work. This, in popular form, the author sets out to give.

He starts with Deuteronomy, about which he says, " with reference to this book one might almost paraphrase a familiar liturgical formula and say, ' Here beginneth the Old Testament,' " and, after a short sketch of its historical background, shows how this ' first Bible ' was moulded, both in what it included and what it excluded, by a philosophy of history and a theology. It achieved three enduring results; it gave rise to the ' Bible idea,' that is, that there should be a written will of God, which would inevitably gather sanctity about itself: it gave such an emphasis to the doctrine of retribution that " the idea was accepted by later generations as having divine origin and sanction," it gathered together and preserved practically all that had survived of the history of Israel from the time of the Judges to the Exile.

In ch. 3 Longacre goes on to show what led the Priestly Writers to make a ' second Bible,' and what its significance for the present day is. " The fundamental message of this document is not to be found in verbal formulas but in the profound fact that men find God in their own day and in their own world."

In ch. 4 he discusses the early traditions preserved in both Bibles, showing why they were preserved. In the next four chapters he deals with the Prophets, the Wisdom Books, the Psalter and the latest writings. Ch. 9 is devoted to " Backgrounds of Interpretation," and ch. 10 to " The Living Voice of the Old Testament." There is a brief note on the Septuagint and the Documents of the Hexateuch, and a very short Bibliography.

That there is need for such a book as this is unquestioned, for not only is it true, as Longacre himself says, that the many ' analytical ' books about the Old Testament have given the devout reader some justification for the charge that modern students have

torn the Bible to pieces: it is equally true that there are still all too many ministers who feel that once they are able to break up, let us say, the Pentateuch into its sources, then their concern with it is at an end. But the most important thing about the Pentateuch —and this is true for the historian and the student of comparative religion as well as for the theologian and the preacher—is not *how* it was composed, but *why* it was composed. The Pentateuch, and all the other divisions of the Old Testament, and the Canon as a whole, came into being for definite reasons which can be discerned, and any book which sets out to explain these, and so to demonstrate the underlying unities, is welcome as well as valuable.

None the less, it can be doubted if *The Old Testament—Its Form and Purpose* is the one we have been waiting for. One passes by not a few statements in it which would certainly not go unchallenged by a large body of modern scholars, such as, in regard to the early traditions of Israel, that " the religious use of them made by the Deuteronomists and the priestly writers, continued ever since, has obscured their true character. Their outstanding aspects are literary and patriotic " ; or, in regard to the prophets, that " they felt no need for priest or ritual, and their view of religion was so different from that of the priests that the two were almost mutually exclusive " (though what Longacre says about the prophetic emphasis on " knowledge " is worth saying). But there are certain broad criticisms of the book as a whole. For one thing, if it is written, as it is written, for the " non-technical " reader, it perhaps assumes too much. Is the average educated man in America, any more than here, acquainted with the main lines of Old Testament criticism, or with the general course of Hebrew history? A short chapter on each of these would have made the book much more useful to those for whom it is meant. Then, one is left with the impression that a great part of the Bible grew up in the study. It is true that it was largely by their writings that the schools of D and P effected what they did effect of their reforms. But does not such a sentence as " having laid down a principle on which to base the interpretation of national history, these men (the Deuteronomists) now proceeded to interpret history as a whole " suggest that they were more interested in theories than in the purification of the Faith? Certainly the practical effect of *Tendenzenschriften* cannot be denied, and it is after all with the literature and not with the history of the Old Testament that Longacre is concerned. But the men who drew up D and P were reformers before they were writers. A long battling preceded their writing. Third, one would have welcomed some account of the formation of the Canon.

But it is a valuable pioneer book. Can some British scholar give us soon both a popular book like Longacre's and a technical book for scholars?

Longacre was until recently Professor of Old Testament literature and religion at Iliff School of Theology, Denver, and the book is the second Annual Southwestern University Lectures, Georgetown, Texas.

D. M. G. Stalker.

Philosophie der Erscheinung, Erster Teil. Von Heinrich Barth. Benno Schwabe & Co., Basel, 1947. Swiss francs 28.

This handsomely produced book, though it runs to about a quarter of a million words, is but the first volume of a larger work which is to trace the history of reflection on the problem of the nature of appearance, and of the relation of appearance to reality, throughout the whole course of European thought. The present instalment covers classical antiquity and the Christian and Mohammedan Middle Ages. It is divided into six parts, the first dealing with pre-Socratic Philosophy in Greece, the second with Plato, the third with Aristotle, the fourth with neo-Platonism, the fifth with the Middle Ages, and the last with the treatment of " possibility," or contingent being, throughout the whole period.

Beyond this six-fold division the book has no further subdivisions of any kind, no intermediate rubrics, no running headlines, no summaries of the argument, no analytic table of contents and no index. This makes for a very heavy piece of reading, there being nothing for it but to take the plunge at page one and keep one's breath as well as one can until the end. The author himself is sufficiently sound of wind and never seems to flag. Judged by the ordinary standards of modern philosophical prose, he cannot perhaps be fairly charged with being long-winded in the sense of verbose; but at least he is about as exhaustive and detailed as it is possible to be. The subject may seem a very circumscribed one for so copious a treatment, but the author is convinced that it offers a promising approach to a number of major philosophical problems still awaiting solution, and in fact he succeeds in relating almost the whole thought of Plato, Aristotle and the others to his chosen topic. On the other hand, he repudiates any desire to set up his approach as the only fruitful one, and especially the intention to be creating a philosophical system that should be a " philosophy of appearance " in the same sense as was, for example, von Hartmann's system a " philosophy of the unconscious." The present

work offers no system of any kind, being essentially an historical study.

About the high quality of the investigation no instructed reader can be in any doubt. Its accurate and comprehensive scholarship is everywhere matched with outstanding philosophical acumen. No student of Platonism, of Aristotelianism, of neo-Platonism, or of Scholasticism could read the relevant chapter without great profit and enlightenment. Each of these great systems is made the object of a consideration and appraisal marked by great independence of thought, and undertaken from the point of view of a most realistic outlook on the total human situation. As the reader proceeds from chapter to chapter, he feels he is being very gently led towards something of a positive solution, and it is likely that the succeeding volumes will help further towards this end. A natural curiosity suggests the question whether any affinity is here to be detected with the views of the author's more famous brother. There is indeed a resemblance in the prolixity of the treatment, and perhaps also in the style of writing; but as regards substance, the most that can be said on the basis of this single volume is that the theologian would probably approve of the general perspective in which the philosopher sees a number of the major philosophical issues with which he deals.

The author relates how the late Eberhard Grisebach remarked to him early in the war that, when the fighting was over, the scholars of the unravaged neutral countries must not be found standing with empty hands; for these Swiss scholars, islanded as they were in a Europe flaming with war, were always acutely conscious of the historical situation in which they stood. Professor Barth shows some concern that his own substantial handful may seem a little irrelevant to that situation, but he claims that " the history of knowledge has always something to say to the history of collapse," since there is no hope for the future except through a better understanding of the past. Few will be disposed to deny the validity of this claim.

JOHN BAILLIE.

Hartlib, Dury and Comenius. By G. H. TURNBULL. University Press of Liverpool. Hodder and Stoughton. 30s.

A generous grant from the Research Fund of the University of Sheffield has enabled Professor G. H. Turnbull of Sheffield to produce a book which is bound to find a place in every university and theological library. For it is a valuable historical record, beautifully printed, the result of much painstaking devotion.

It all came about through the discovery in a box of the papers of Samuel Hartlib, thousands of them, to the arrangement and identification of which, resembling, as he says, " a jig-saw puzzle on a gigantic scale," Professor Turnbull has devoted a prodigious amount of time and labour. They provide a vast amount of new material for the understanding of the times, and let a flood of new light in upon the activities of those scholars and preachers who were labouring to secure ecclesiastical peace in Europe during the reign of Charles I and the Protector. Their two main interests in the pursuit of which they travelled widely over Europe, enduring many hardships, were " the advancement of Protestant religion and the reformation of learning."

The papers consist largely of the correspondence of Samuel Hartlib, John Dury, and John Amos Comenius. As early as 1641 when they met in London, those three men had entered into a compact, each with his own particular task, to promote ecclesiastical peace, to educate Christian Youth, and to reform the study of true widsom, and to do nothing without mutual advice and agreement. Hartlib was the Protestant humanist, Dury the Protestant preacher, and Comenius the Protestant philosopher.

Professor Turnbull deals, first with Samuel Hartlib, his family and personal history, and various activities, religious and philanthropic; and especially his labour for the relief of outcast Protestant ministers. A native of Germany, he came to Cambridge at an early age, and England became his home. He became the friend of Milton, who dedicated to him his tractate on education, the friend of Henry More, John Pym, Robert Boyle. He was widely known and loved for his charity, in taking to his home and board outed ministers, although he was often pressed for money and always in poor health. He had a mind full of ideas, being as Evelyn described him " a master of innumerable curiosities," and wrote widely on many subjects, mathematics, husbandry, the care of the poor, etc. Professor Turnbull lists 65 publications from his pen. He kept up a constant correspondence with European scholars, and especially with Comenius, the head of the exiled Moravian Church, with whose views on education, and *pansophia Christiana*, he was in deep sympathy. He died in 1662 " trusted and beloved," says John Dury, " as he deserved to be everywhere by all that were in place of note."

Professor Turnbull next takes up the story of John Dury, the preacher, and friend of Hartlib (1596-1680). He did not have Hartlib's range of interests; he had but one consuming passion to the day of his death, to secure peace between the Reformed and Lutheran Churches.

Dury was also of continental origin. He was born a Hollander, and educated at Leyden. But at an early age he also found his way to England where he gave service both in teaching and preaching. For a time also he was a presbyterian minister at Elbing in Germany. But he was constantly on the move, in France, Germany, Sweden, etc., pursuing his task of ecclesiastical peace. He petitioned Gustavus Adolphus for help in establishing peace, and also had an interview with him which he describes at length, and which resulted in an invitation from the King to come and talk with his Divines. Back in England he is found in discussions with William Laud. He was appointed a member of the Westminster Assembly of Divines, in the counsels of which he took an active part. Then he returned to the Continent leaving his wife and child behind to pursue his task but he found it hard. His story ends sadly. The Elector of Brandenburg rejected all his proposals for peace and he was turned out of the Church by the Reformed Divines as a heretic, at Cassel, in 1667.

He had many troubles, financial and otherwise, but he battled on with tongue and pen until his death in Cassel, in 1680. Professor Turnbull lists 228 publications from his pen.

With the third member of the pact, John Amos Comenius (1592-1670), Professor Turnbull next deals, having found twenty letters from him in the box, written to Hartlib. With a great admiration for his educational work and methods, as well as for his *pansophia*—the great system which he had worked out as a complete statement of the whole circle of knowledge—Hartlib made strenuous efforts to raise funds to bring him over the channel to assist in reforming the public education of England. After being frustrated by gales he arrived in England in 1641 and stayed with Hartlib. But the times were not propitious on account of the outbreak of war in Ireland, and the imminence of civil war in England. His visit and his proposals for educational reform bore little fruit, and finding " so little content in England," as he said, he departed. But Hartlib's correspondence with him continued. Professor Turnbull lists 47 publications by Comenius.

By his minute examination of the contents of this old box, which, he says, are by no means exhausted, Professor Turnbull has done historical scholarship a great service. It is a fascinating book full of interesting domestic details, as well as thinking, at the highest level, on educational, religious, economic, and political matters; a mine of information on 17th century Europe into which one digs with constant pleasure and profit.

JOHN MCCONNACHIE.

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THE UNIQUENESS OF THE WORD OF GOD

by The Rev. JOHN McCONNACHIE, D.D.

We have entered on a period of history in which it is becoming difficult to obtain a hearing for the New Testament and Reformed doctrine of the Word of God. For it rests on the belief in a Word which God has spoken from beyond, once for all in time, and which is absolute, ultimate, and authoritative for the Church.

It is not a truth which can be arrived at by scientific investigation, and on that account it is a *scandalon* to the scientist, and to this scientifically-minded generation. It is not a truth which is discoverable by the study of history (although it has been given inside history), and therefore it is a *scandalon* to the historian. It is not a truth which can be reached by the processes of human thought, and on that account it is a *scandalon* to the philosopher—" the scandal of particularity "—because of its claim to be absolute, authoritative, and " once for all ". Against this he has a rooted prejudice, combined with a strong desire to transform the " once for all " into a not-once for all, a timeless idea, in short, a philosophy.

The Church is being pressed into the decision that it has either to stand firm on the truth of a special revelation, a Divine irruption into history, on which the Christian Church is founded—but which the modern world rejects—or it must go the way of world-knowledge to the end, and, drawing the last consequences of the modern view of history, abandon the Christian doctrine of revelation in its New Testament sense as " Word of God ", which was the witness of the early Reformers.

For this condition of things the Church has to accept a measure of blame. It has too much sought to understand God from man, in place of understanding man from God. It has endeavoured to bind God to man, rather than bind man to God. In its preaching and theology it has declared what man thinks about God, rather than what God thinks

about man. It has attempted to understand God through man, rather than to understand man through God. It has neglected the wise counsel of Calvin that " no man can arrive at the true knowledge of himself without having first contemplated the divine character and then descended to the contemplation of his own " (*Inst.* 1.1.2). In short, it has depreciated the uniqueness of revelation as the New Testament writers and the Reformers understood it, and treated revelation and discovery as but two aspects of the same process, differing perhaps in degree but not in character. " Revelation and Incarnation ", says one of our Scottish theologians, " are not unique historical prodigies but are by God's grace of the very warp and woof of human experience."

But are they? Can we accept that view?

The time seems opportune for a discussion of the Nature and Character of Revelation as " Word of God ". The Divine Word has to become again something great and significant by a return to its New Testament meaning as reaffirmed by the Reformers, which conceives of Reality, not as an object of man's search, but as the subject of man's life; God's seeking of man, speaking with man, and dealing with him in grace.

'Tis from the mercy of our God
That all our hopes begin.

1. The Unique Nature of the Word of God

In later usage the term *Word of God* has come to be applied to the Scriptures. This is " the written Word," the record of, and the witness to, the Word of God spoken to the saints of old, who were so led by the Spirit that they faithfully recorded every word of God spoken to their hearts. By its power of touching our hearts and lifting our souls into converse with God, the Bible so approves itself as the true and perfect Word of God that we rightly speak of it as " the Word of God ". We have our Lord's own example to support us, for He Himself lived in the Scriptures of the Old Testament, calling it to His aid in the great crises of His life: His temptation and His passion; and quoting it with reverence on many occasions as the authoritative Word of God. One of His most momentous pronouncements on the sanctity of the marriage relationship He based on the authority of Gen. 2.24 (Matt. 19.5).

But the term *Word of God*, as we find it in the Old Testament, means something quite different. It indicates the actual "meeting" of God with his servants, the prophets, a personal encounter in which He discloses His mind to them, that they may declare it to His People, Israel. It is not a bare, abrupt meeting which comes and passes. Something happens which has continuity in its results both on the man and on the situation. God in the Old Testament is known by what He does. He reveals Himself in acts, the act of redemption from Egypt, of which Moses is the prophet, or some act of chastisement upon the nation or upon other nations. Preceding these, or going with them, is the Divine Word spoken by the prophet who is the interpreter of God's providence. Both act and speech, agent and content, are expressed in the term *Word of God*.

All real knowledge of God, according to the Hebrew writers, is bound up with this personal encounter with God, and cannot be separated from it. This alone is real knowledge, compared with which the knowledge of mere ideas is only secondary knowledge. The very Hebrew term for "word" (*dabar*), which has a verbal and not a substantival form, indicates action, personal relation, the confrontation of a *Thou* and an *I*. The Greek equivalent (*logos*) in its Biblical usage, has the same activist character.

At a very early date, if not from the beginning, the term *Word of God* was employed in the Christian Church to denote the special revelation given in and by Jesus Christ. "The ministry of the Word" became the sole preoccupation of the Apostles. It was "the word of the Cross"; "the word of the Kingdom"; "the word of reconciliation"; "the word of salvation". Its living, dynamic quality was expressed in such phrases as "the word of God increased"; "So mightily grew the word". Its concrete quality was truly Hebraic. It was left for Greek thought later to convert its concretes into abstracts, and to replace the actuality of "meeting" with necessary truths of reason.

In this essay I propose, for the most part, to employ the term *Word of God* in its primary sense of the act, or event, of revelation itself, the meeting of God and man in grace. God's Word is God Himself in His Revelation; God's speaking

to and dealing with man. Revelation is the unveiling of a Person to persons, the confrontation of a *Thou* with an *I*. In its essence it is not the communication of an idea or a doctrine but the converse of Mind with mind. It is a real coming of God from beyond the space-time *continuum* into the world of time and space, in Jesus Christ, a real Divine Action and Divine Initiative in which the Word became flesh and the flesh became Word. However great the distance to be crossed between the holy and sovereign God and the flesh of sin, it has been crossed in the God-Man. Thus in the Incarnation we have the complete and perfect meeting of God and man, and the all-sufficient answer to the Old Testament cry of a Job: "O that I knew where I might find him, that I might come even to his seat."

In order that the Biblical revelation should be given its true and central place, it is not necessary to assume that God has not revealed Himself to other men and peoples. There have been other approaches of Reality to men. The Sovereign God speaks to whom He wills, to a Cyrus or a Socrates. Other religions claim to rest on revelations, to be the disclosure of some truths of the supra-natural order, which men would not have known but for that particular communication. But no religion knows the concept of revelation as Christianity does. In all other religions, revelation relates itself to singulars, and is therefore a collection of many single, repeatable revelations which may continue to the end of time. There always will be men whose spiritual endowments will enable them to reach new insights into truth and whose capacities God may choose to enhance.

But the Christian Revelation, which meets us in the Old and New Testament, is *One Word*, pointing to Christ, which God spoke "at sundry times and in divers manners, and in these last days unto us by his Son" (Heb. 1.1). Luther described the Old and New Testaments as "two lips of the one Divine mouth of Jesus Christ". It is not one of the many revelations which we have to do with here, but the "once-for-all" Divine Sacrifice of the incarnate *Logos*, Jesus Christ, who is the absolute revelation of what God is, and of what man is meant to become. "This he did once" (*ephapax*), "he entered in once" (Heb. 7.27, 9.12). How concerned

all the New Testament writers are that we should not bypass the unique significance of the Cross!

There is, accordingly, a fundamental distinction between the Christian revelation and other revelations. It was not a movement *within* the world but a movement *to* the world which cannot be placed inside any general history of religions. For no other religion ever ventured to affirm that God became a man and suffered on the Cross.

The modern relativist philosophy of religion which attempts to arrive at the nature of revelation by placing the religions in an ascending scale, with Christianity at the summit, misses the significance of the Christian revelation, which is as much out of the category as it is out of the crowd of other religions. It stands over against all other religions, not as an individual among individuals, not as a perfect among perfects, not even as a final among preparatory religions; but as another *genus;* as the truth of God stands over against the search for truth, or as the answer stands over against the question. There is a difference of character which disqualifies all other religions from claiming a place beside the Christian faith. Only a religion which brings other religions to judgment, as Christianity does, can have universal validity.

The Word of God in Jesus Christ entered into history, not only as a unique power of renewal, but as a judgment. This was clearly enough perceived in the early days. Of all the new religions which swarmed out of the East into the Western world in the day of Jesus, the only religion to be persecuted was the Christian Faith. Its intolerance, its refusal of any alliance with the other religions of mankind, marked it off as something unique and apart.

It has become a commonplace of our time to represent Jesus as the crown of history, and of humanity and, as such, to be the revelation of God. But if Jesus be no more than the crown of history and humanity, then He belongs to our world on its religious side. He is one of us, a great spiritual personality, but only comparatively different from others, and, therefore, with no distinctive word to speak. But this comparative difference has nothing to do with revelation as the New Testament understands it. The need of revelation arises out of the qualitative difference between God and man,

and it is in relation to that difference that Jesus has his significance in the New Testament as the Divine *Logos*. But for that difference between God and man, that gulf which separated them (and which man from his side could not bridge), there would have been no need for a Mediator.

The New Testament witness is that Jesus stands related to religious history, not as the crown of humanity, but as the all-commanding crisis of humanity in His life, death, and resurrection; a crisis revealed only to faith. In the Christ according to the flesh must be discovered by faith the Christ according to the Spirit, the Eternal Son of God made flesh, before He can *become* revelation. His person is a mystery revealed only to faith. His " works " were mysteries rather than marvels, with convincing power only to faith. Even the resurrection, which is the crowning revelation, the absolute miracle, is to be understood not as an irrefragable outward fact—for belief and unbelief are alike possible beside the empty tomb—but as a historical Divine event, a deed of God, which is only to be grasped in the category of revelation and by the sensorium of faith. It is " on Christ's resurrection ", says Calvin, " that our faith principally rests. For since there appears nothing but infirmity in the cross and burial of Jesus, faith must proceed beyond all these things to be furnished with sufficient strength " (*Inst.* 2.16.13).

But if the resurrection had been an event visible to all men and accessible to the unbeliever, if its wonder could have been experienced by profane eyes, it would have ceased to belong to the category of revelation and it would have been no decision of faith to believe in the Risen Christ.

In speaking thus about the other religions, we exclude, of course, Judaism, of which the Christian Gospel, as Christ Himself taught, is the fulfilment. The Old and New Testaments cannot be separated. It is one Word they bear witness to, one God Who speaks through both. " It was God in Christ all through the Old Testament," wrote my old professor, Dr. Rainy, " and the footsteps of Christ are heard all along the way. But it is only in New Testament light that this is clearly seen."

So it is not simply God's revelation of Himself in general terms which we have in the Bible, but a revelation which

follows one clearly defined plan, that inside the general stream of history there shall be a current of defined appointment for a specific purpose; God's revelation of Himself to the world through Israel. It is this which constitutes the unity of the Bible and makes its history: *Heilsgeschichte*—Sacred history.

This was the Reformation insight—the vision of Calvin as he expounds it in the *Institutes* (2.9-11)—the existence of a Divine Purpose working in and through the history of the Chosen People towards a consummation determined before all ages. The whole story of the people of Israel, he shows, their Divine call, their redemption from Egypt, the giving of the law, the building of the temple, the tragedy of the Exile, the subsequent return of the remnant—all were the foreshadowings of the greater and final salvation given in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, apart from which they have in themselves no abiding significance, and are not fully comprehensible.

We arrive, then, at a judgment of the Biblical Word of Revelation as being unique, once-for-all in time, the Word of God, a lamp to the feet and a light to the path of the wayfaring sons of men. It is not an emanation from the sphere in which we find ourselves, nor from some subliminal region within us, nor is it a mystical illumination of the soul. It is a word from beyond this world of time, a Word from our Father " in heaven ", which breaks in upon us from another dimension, falling, as it were, vertically, and cutting across our human wills and preferences. To quote Professor A. E. Taylor, it is " an intrusion of the other and supra-historical into the ordinary routine of becoming ".

This is the uniqueness of the Word of God as revealed to us in the Bible in which the converse of God with His saints is recorded in all its stages, up to the full and abiding revelation of saving love in the person of Jesus Christ. He is the Eternal *Logos*—God's purpose incarnate—the ultimate clue to the mystery of God's nature and final purpose in the world. " In Him," says St. Paul, " all things hold together "—i.e. are a coherent whole (Col. 1.17).

But one thing has to be emphasised. This is a judgment of faith, the knowledge of which is not open to the historians as such. It would be foolish to demand a historical or scientific

proof of the truth of revelation. That Jesus is other than a great religious Founder, a Buddha, or a Zarathustra, can as little be proved as that He is the Son of God; and, if it could be proved, it would be something quite other than what faith is.

Outwardly viewed by the historian, Christianity is seen to be one of the world religions. The Bible appears as a document of the history of a primitive Asiatic race. Jesus appears as the Rabbi of Nazareth; the Christian Church as a historical and sociological growth. What we call history is always only the outside. At the heart of the event is the Divine mystery revealed only to faith, which no man can betray because no man knows save him to whom it is revealed. We have to believe in order to make sense of things. *Credo ut intelligam.*

2. The Unique Content of the Word of God

The Word of God is unique in its Content as well as in its Nature. What distinguishes it from all human thoughts, philosophies, and even revelations, which men believe themselves to have experienced, is that it is the Revelation, once for all, which God the Father has given of Himself in His Son, who is " the image of the invisible God, the first born of every creature " (Col. 1.15). Of this Word the Bible is the authoritative document, the book of the great acts of God in which He has made Himself known.

(i) This Word of Divine Revelation meets us first as the Word of *God the Creator*, who in an act of love, without which there would have been no cosmos, no history, no incarnation, no outpouring of the Spirit, called the world into existence by a Divine *fiat*. God *said* " let there be light ", and there was light. God *said* " let us make man in our image after our likeness ", and man, made in the image of God, drew breath.

It was the Word of One who was power as well as wisdom and love; the Word of a transcendent God. This does not mean that God is not immanent in the world of His creation. He is immanent in His grace and goodness, but it is the immanence of the transcendent God who is other than the world of His creation, and yet related to it by having bound it to Himself, through His Son. Rightly does our Creed begin with God: " the Maker of heaven and earth ". It is

the first act of the great drama of Divine Grace. Rightly does it pass immediately to Jesus Christ in whom the secret of the Creator, and the secret of the creature, are revealed in that God the Creator became Himself creature. God became man. This knowledge of God the Creator we cannot separate from the knowledge of His dealing with men, and especially from His covenant with Israel.

This truth of creation in the Biblical revelation is unique, distinguishing it from all other religions and conceptions of antiquity. Paganism had no knowledge of God as Creator. Greek philosophy knew only of a World Moulder. The most that science, working with its concepts of causation on a different level, can offer is a world-ground, or mind-energy at work in the world. But the Bible, lit up from beyond, ascribes creation to the Spirit of God. " Thou sendest forth Thy Spirit, they are created." That God is Creator, who called the universe into being " out of nothing " by an act of volition, is to be known only through revelation, and rightly finds its place in the first article of our Creed: " I *believe* in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth." It is a knowledge of faith and therefore a call that we should contemplate, adore and worship the Creator. " Thou art worthy O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created " (Rev. 4.11).

The Word of God, the Creator, is, at the same time, a claim upon us. It asks from us nothing less than our whole existence. " How can you ", asks Calvin, " entertain a thought of God, the Creator, without immediately reflecting that, being a creature of His formation, you must by right of creation be subject to His authority, that you are indebted to Him for your life and that all your actions should be done in reference to Him? "

Such actions are also to be creative, for in His creative work God has called men to be workers together with Him. Creation is not something which lies in the past. There is a *creatio continua* proceeding through the activities of men whom God has called to be also creators.

(ii) The Word of God reaches us, secondly, as the Word of *God the Redeemer*. God did not, because of man's fall into

disobedience, withdraw Himself from those relationships of love in which he was made and still stands. On the contrary man's sin called forth a fuller expression of the Divine Love which pursued him into the far country to seek and to save the lost by means of a Mediator, since man deprived of freedom of will could not save himself (1 Tim. 2.5).

This " so great salvation " is the main theme of revelation, both Old Testament and New. It is God's great Love Story. We cannot understand the Word of God as Creator apart from the Old Testament, for the New Testament writers simply take it for granted. Nor can we understand the Word of God as Reconciler and Redeemer apart from the Old Testament conception of God the Creator. For how can one concern himself with redemption if one does not know the concern of being lost? We must needs begin with *Genesis* if we are to understand *Revelation* with its grand hymn of redemption. " Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing." The New Testament revelation is the glorious transformation which the Creator has wrought upon His ruined creation, whose consummation is to be a new heaven and a new earth. It is with the one God, Creator, and Redeemer, that the whole Word of God is concerned.

As the Word of God the Creator issues in a commandment under which we stand, so also does the Word of God the Reconciler and Redeemer. It sends us forth into the whole field of Christian ethics. As God calls us to enter into partnership with Him as creators, so He calls us into the enterprise of redemption. The uniqueness of Christian ethics among the other ethical systems of the world is based on the new creation of which human nature is capable. A pagan like Plato could count on no such hope. But a St. Paul could say: " By grace are ye saved through faith and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God." No wonder that one of the most characteristic qualities of the early Christians was their joyousness. Justification by faith alone may appear to the philosopher to be against all logic; yet it is not merely the foundation, but the fountain of all Christian morals. Dr. Rainy set it down, as a Church historian, that the great change which came over the world with the coming of

Christianity was that " the life of goodness became an assured career ". For justification opened the road to sanctification, and what men were called to do was to proceed upon it. Renewed by the Holy Spirit those " called to be saints " pursued the road of faith and obedience, the humble, thankful, loving obedience of those who knew themselves to be redeemed. " There is now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus." That is the Word of *God the Redeemer*.

(iii) The Word of God reaches us, thirdly, as the Word of *God the Judge*. In virtue of the fact that God is our Creator who has bound man to Himself, and Himself to man, His Word is like a two-edged sword, death-dealing and life-giving, a judging as well as a saving Word.

The solemn note of Judgment sounds out through the whole Bible, especially in the prophets and on the lips of Jesus and the Apostles. For the Bible is an eschatological book concerned with men's final destiny in which time is viewed in the light of the eternal. It has a dramatic conception of history as leading up to a dénouement, the last Judgment, the final victory of God's cause, when the great drama of Divine Grace reaches its issue. Righteousness on earth is the issue. " Behold I create new heavens and a new earth." It is His righteousness that causes Him to bring forth righteousness, His righteousness that explains His wrath. No antithesis is intended between God's righteousness and His grace. He is both righteous and gracious. His judgment is His mercy and His grace. We are not to say that God is righteous and *yet* a Redeemer. He is righteous and *therefore* a Redeemer. The Judge is not in the first instance One who punishes the one and rewards the other, but One who creates order and restores what has been destroyed.

In the Old Testament the Judge is God. He is the Judge of the individual and of the nations, and of Israel in particular, because of her peculiar privileges as the People of God. In the New Testament Jesus steps into the place of God as his vice-regent and " sitteth on the right hand of God ". He who came in humiliation and took on Himself the judgment on man in his sin, will come again on the clouds of heaven and in great power and glory. These are pictures, but pictures of the final reality.

This is the world we go to meet, a world which is already here. If there is terror in it, there is also comfort. "It is a source of peculiar consolation," says Calvin, "to hear that Christ will preside at the Judgment. . . Indeed it is no inconsiderable security that we shall stand before no other tribunal than that of our Redeemer."

This may be taken as a brief summary of the content of God's Word, His special revelation to His Church, by His self-revealing acts. But, that there may be no misunderstanding, let me add that it is not to be taken as if the activity of God through His Word is His only activity in the world and in the souls of men. There is, and must needs be, what was known in medieval times as *assistentia generalis*, and by some of the Reformers as "common grace"—a general as well as an individual personal dealing with men—an immanent Divine working in the world as a whole, of which we have no knowledge; that continuous activity whereby He sustains all things in being by His power. God, we may be assured, is active in all things and nothing happens apart from His activity.

I have used the word "content" with some hesitation since God does not give Himself into our hands as a "content" but keeps us in His own hands. "The Word of God is not bound." It is an activity that is unconfinable. But in absence of a better, we let the word "content" stand.

3. The Unique Qualities of the Word

When we pass to consider the qualities and characteristics of the Word of God, we realise that we are moving in a realm far removed from abstract thought and impersonal truths.

(i) The Word of God is a *personal authoritative Word*. This constitutes the difference between the Word of God to a prophet, which he delivers as not his own, and the Word of a moral or religious genius. The word of the genius, once spoken, becomes everyman's, to be added to the stock of religious ideas. Such an idea is timeless, true to all circumstances, separable from its origin and thus capable of becoming public property. There is no personal relation, no meeting of a *Thou* and an *I* through an idea. But what the prophet says is a definite concrete living Word, spoken to him at a particular hour and in a particular place, which he duly

records. And it must always remain bound to the person of the speaker, who in the last resort is God Himself. God never spoke a word to any prophet which was not exactly suited to the man and the occasion. Separate it from the occasion and the man, and it ceases to be the perfect Word of God. It can never be converted into a universal truth of reason.

The most important thing is not *what* the prophet says but *that* he says it, with Divine authority, as something which has its meaning and validity in the fact that no other can say it, because no other has the commission to say it. It is this which gives its peculiar individual quality to the Word of God, making it unique. The supreme illustration of this is to be found in the words of Christ, and His own attitude to them. He declared that what He said was from God. Heaven and earth would pass but His words would not pass. He stood in the midst of humanity and declared that His teaching was divine in its authority and the response of the human heart was " never man so spake ".

(ii) The Word of God is a *historical Word.* It is the Word of a living God who enters into history and is to be met with in and through the events of the world. God reveals Himself in history, in special times, special places and, in particular, in His own incarnate Son through whom the darkness of history is lighted up.

This does not mean that the movements of history are forthwith to be identified with the Divine Spirit. No bit of history, as such, is revelation. Revelation is history but history, as such, is not revelation. The Divine and the historical are not one and the same. But Divine Action always takes the character of a historical event, something which belongs to this world. It is essential indeed, if the Word of God is to reach us, that it take place in history. That the Word of God became flesh is an event of revelation, but it would not have been so if Jesus had not been " crucified under Pontius Pilate " at a historical point of time. The Bible is history—the history of the work of redemption—but it is also revelation, containing as it does the inner history of the converse of God with man.

(iii) The Word of God is a *contingent Word.* It always has the character of event, surprise, unforeseen, undetermined,

which cannot be calculated or presupposed, because it is the activity of a Sovereign God. Man is a contingent being in a universe abounding in contingency. His very existence depends on contingency. And just as revelation takes hold on the historical as its vehicle, so it takes hold on the contingent. Jesus Himself was born into the sphere of the contingent, meeting it at the very beginning. He was laid in a manger " because there was no room for them in the inn ".

(iv) The Word of God is an *existential Word*. It is never a body of truth, a fixed *datum*, which can be set before us in a purely objective manner. It is always a *dandum*, which *becomes* the Word of God to man only in the event of faith through the mystery of the Spirit. This crisis need not be visible, nor need a man himself be aware of it, for it is a crisis not *of* his life so much as *in* his life. Faith is not something which a man can investigate even in himself. It is concealed, not only from external observation, but even from the man concerned. It is something which he cannot account for nor explain to the unbeliever. " Since the Word of God cannot be known without faith," says Calvin, " it is folly to think that it can be demonstrated to infidels." It is " existential truth," that is, truth which, in order to be seen and known in its reality has to become true to the man himself. All he can say is: " I know that whereas I was blind, now I see."

So we cannot speak in the abstract about faith but only and always in a highly concrete and existential manner. This emphasis on the " existential " is usually attributed to Kierkegaard, but Luther had already discovered the problem of the existential and with that the problem of the individual. Therein lies the difference between a knowledge that is purely speculative and a knowledge that is personal and practical. There is a whole world of difference between such existential truth and the necessary truths of reason. It is either *my* faith and *your* faith, or it is no faith at all.

(v) The Word of God is a *Divine-human Word*, the Word of God through the words of a man which are not exempt from the laws and limitations of human speech. What we have in the Scriptures is not an objective record of revelation, but personal witness, the speech of God with men as set down by themselves, with all the accuracy at their command.

It is this which gives its unique charm and variety and colour to the Bible, so that it is at one and the same time the most human and the most divine of all books. Its writers were not megaphones through which God poured His truth, but men, inspired men. He spoke not only through them but to them, and in them, and we can no more understand the Divine Word without taking account of the men to whom God spoke than we can understand a human conversation without taking account of the separate parties to it.

Thus the Word of God reaches us coloured by the personalities of the writers, and shaped by their experience and capacity to receive. God could do more through an Isaiah than through a Haggai; He could reveal His righteousness through an Amos, His tenderness through a Hosea or Jeremiah. "We must not be afraid", said Professor Robertson Smith, "of the human side of the Scripture." To confine ourselves to the Divine side would, he said, be thoroughly unprotestant and unevangelical. It would be a survival of medieval exegesis which buried the true sense of Scripture. It is to the credit of the Reformers that they changed all that, and brought about nothing less than a resurrection of the living Word, buried for many ages under the dust of a false interpretation.

(vi) The Word of God is a *living dynamic Word.* It is never static but always "quick and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit" (Heb. 4.12). There is no revelation of God which resides, as such, in nature, or in what has been called "the ordinances of nature". There is no revelation of God which resides, as such, in man, either in his soul or mind or conscience. It is inseparable from Him who speaks it. It is not something which we can hold as a private possession. It can never belong to the sphere of human having, since it always implies a call to man and a crisis for man. He who will hold it must do so by ever repeated taking hold.

Thus the Word that comes to us from the side of the Eternal, without being a part of us, becomes a power that works within us, it may be without our awareness, like a seed hidden in the ground, and transforms us by its living dynamic quality. "It must be God who first comes to meet us, and

who through all the moral life works in us," says Professor A. E. Taylor, " in a sense which is more than metaphorical."

It was a deep prophetic instinct on the part of the Reformers, especially Luther, to rediscover and liberate the existential and dynamic quality of the Word of God which had long been overlaid by a static scholastic rationalism deriving from Greek thought. Thomas Aquinas had built it into the very structure of medieval Catholicism in his grand attempt to effect a synthesis of the Biblical revelation and the metaphysics of Aristotle. Against this the Reformation was a protest.

Unfortunately this effort on the part of the Reformers to de-hellenise the Christian Faith only partially succeeded. A new Protestant orthodoxy came into being, the dynamic truth was again converted into a conceptual idea and the living Word was frozen into dogmas. It is a recurring tendency in the Church to lose hold of the dynamic power of the Word of God and to drift into the false security of dogma against which the sons of the Reformation must always remain on guard.

(vii) The Word of God is a *self-evidencing Word*. As a Word from the beyond it would be incomprehensible unless it was possible for man to receive and understand it. This possibility is the work of the Holy Spirit by which the miracle from without is met by the miracle within. As Calvin puts it: " nothing is effected by the Word without the illumination of the Holy Spirit." But, lit up by the Spirit, the Word is " like a mirror in which faith sees God " (*Inst.* 3.2.33).

Revelation, as Word of God, cannot remain only outward and objective. It must become inward and subjective; that is it must become an experience. This takes place in the miracle of faith which is wrought by the Word through the Holy Spirit. " Faith ", says Calvin, " has a perpetual relation to the Word and can no more be separated from it than the rays from the sun whence they proceed. Take away the Word and there will be no faith left." That element which lifts belief out of the region of probabilities into the sphere of certainty is given by the Holy Spirit, bearing witness in and with the Word. The first work of the Word of God is to work this miracle of faith, in which the mind is enlightened to

understand the truth of God, and the heart is established in it.

By this truth the Reformers set great store, the " internal witness of the Holy Spirit " by which God works within the souls of men. He does not coerce. He pleads and draws; convincing the world of sin and of righteousness, and of judgment (John 16.8) through the same Spirit who spoke by the mouths of the prophets. " God alone ", says Calvin, " is a sufficient witness of Himself in His own Word. This Word will never gain credit in the hearts of men till it be confirmed by the internal testimony of the Spirit " (*Inst.* 1.7.4).

Thus Word and Spirit are correlatives. Revelation calls for, and at the same time carries with it, the principle of its own interpretation. For only if the movement of God towards the world in Jesus Christ had been accompanied by a corresponding movement within the consciousness of man, could Christ have been known as the revelation of God. That took place in its fulness in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, a gift which God has never withdrawn from His Church.

(viii) The Word of God is a *contemporaneous Word.* Like the mercies of God it is new every morning. In the Bible we have something more than the record of the past utterances of God; in it the voice of God can still be heard to-day and by us. The Word spoken, then and there, becomes a Word spoken here and now, a contemporary word. Not a fixed, unalterable Word out of the past but an actual living Word for the hearing man of to-day. The revelation of God in Christ is never something done and done with; it is something done and yet not done with. It is not only an event of the past, but an event of the present. " We are ", says St. Peter, " to be established in the *present* truth " (2 Pet. 1.12). The Bible is therefore a perpetual recurring occasion for crisis—judging, sifting, searching. At any hour the moment may arrive, a moment no more of time but lifted above time and set in the light of the Eternal, in which God speaks to this man, here and now, His Word for to-day.

This great truth was emphasised by Kierkegaard in his day—the contemporaneousness of the Divine Word, and of Jesus Christ who is our Eternal Contemporary. When Jesus becomes thus contemporaneous, that is when He comes in

the present to us, in spite of the distance of space and time which separates us from the historical Jesus, we stand in immediate personal relation to Him. "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there *am* I in the midst of them." All barriers fall away and the historical Jesus becomes for us the living Christ.

But already the great Reformers, Luther and Calvin, understood well this contemporaneous quality of the Word of God. It was one of the most striking rediscoveries of the day of the Reformation. In the medieval Church the Bible was regarded as something static, the ultimate source of Christian dogma, whereas the Sacraments were the means of grace. Transubstantiation was the great miracle. But to the Reformers the Bible, by its contemporaneous quality, became again the great miracle, the living means of grace, the personal message of the love of God to man, the Word of reconciliation spoken to us as living truth, which we can take home to our hearts, just as the saints of old took it home to their hearts.

Herein also lies the mysterious power of the sermon whose place can never be taken by the best and brightest of addresses. God, the Holy Ghost, makes use of the poor organ of the human word of the preacher in so far as he holds by the Scriptures, that His people may not be without His Word. *Praedicatio verbi divini est verbum divinum.*

(ix) The Word of God is a *rational* Word. As an expression of the Mind of God, who is Eternal Reason, the Word of God must be rational. It is the act in which Reason communicates with reason, Person with person. And since man was made in the image of God, reason must be one and the same in God and in man. The final proof of this is the Incarnation in which God's own Son, the *imago dei* as God purposed man to be, took human flesh and functioned with a human reason.

But when the claim is made, as it is by many, that the Word of God must justify itself at the bar of our reason—that is a different matter. For if our reason could judge revelation, then it would be superior to it. But can it make any such claim? In the Word of God we have a different kind of knowledge from that which the reason supplies, a Divine knowledge, which comes by meeting with God and not by

reflection, a Word which before God spoke was a mystery man otherwise could not have possessed. Revelation must be without meaning to those who approach the mystery of life with the assurance that human reason can entirely solve all mystery.

That man has reason shows his origin from the *Logos* of the Creator to whom he is therefore ontologically related. But sin, which has infected the heart and the will, extends also to the reason, producing a pride and self-sufficiency which opposes a barrier to the Word of God. The light of the creative *Logos* has been darkened. Man is no more in his true mind. He is become eccentric, thrown out of his life's true order into an order, or rather disorder, of death. Since the whole man is fallen away, every part of his nature is affected and he is helpless so far as any capacity to come to the knowledge of God is concerned. His reason is involved in the problem it seeks to solve. He must first come to himself before he can come to God. It is only when the human mind, as Calvin says, " is divested of its natural carnality and resigns itself wholly to the direction of the Holy Spirit " that it can find the answer which it seeks.

Thereupon there ensues that " renovation of the mind " of which the apostle speaks, by which man can render to God " a rational worship " (Rom. 12.1). The reason comes thus to its true life through the Word of God. The self-glorification of man in his pride of knowledge is humbled, and there occurs what originally belonged to the reason, the receiving of the Divine Mind. Faith brings a renewed reason which justifies the old, while asserting its relativity. The living quality of the reason is taken up into the event of revelation, inside which there is a wide field in which the reason can be employed.

(x) The Word of God is a *hidden* Word. Since revelation comes to us, not with a character of proof but in a decision of faith, it must needs have a hidden quality. It is not a miraculous theophany, a wonder which is plain to all, but a mystery revealed only to the recipient.

Of God the Creator we have no empirical knowledge. Neither God the Creator, nor God the Redeemer, neither the Love of God, nor the Wrath of God, is knowable to a fallen world. From man in his creatureliness and sin they are

hidden. Creation is a hidden eschatological fact, the full meaning of which will only be revealed in the new creation in Jesus Christ, the Second Adam. The more we know of Jesus Christ, the more we know of God the Creator. Still more is redemption felt to be a hidden eschatological fact to which our Lord, and St. Paul especially, made frequent reference.

In other ways the Word of God appears as a hidden Word. It is never so given as the objects of this world, in a direct fashion, but always, as Luther said, *sub contraria specie*, in a broken, indirect, dialectical manner. Even in Jesus Christ the Word of God meets us under a worldly manner. Christ appears *incognito* in the form of a servant and in the likeness of sinful flesh. The incarnation itself was a hidden event, even to our Lord's own mother. In so far as it was an earthly event, the birth at Bethlehem was a simple, human occurrence, such as any chronicler might report without in the most distant way perceiving that something Divine had taken place. But:

> Veiled in flesh the Godhead see,
> Hail incarnate Deity.

Also when later the Son of God moved among men He appeared as the very opposite of those shining sons of antiquity we read of. He was so completely hidden that the secret of His person was quite unknown to His contemporaries. " Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary? " The incognito was complete. The Son of God was a village carpenter.

Further, the Word of God comes to us hidden in a one-sided manner, so that we see only one aspect at a time. When we contemplate the Divine transcendence we do not see at the same moment the Divine Immanence, or vice versa. But both are true. Or when we see the human Jesus we do not at the same time see the Divine Christ. Yet both are there and both true. Our knowledge of the God-man is always partial and one-sided. The Word of God in Jesus Christ remains a paradox, a secret. God reveals Himself in hiddenness and hides Himself in His revelation.

This hiddenness of the Word of God has always been a source of perplexity to the saints. " Verily Thou art a God

that hidest Thyself, O God of Israel, the Saviour," cried Isaiah. Luther spoke of the *deus absconditus*—the hidden God. There is an ultimate mystery beyond our comprehension, but we know all we need to know.

(xi) The Word of God is a *last* Word. Not in the sense that it is the last word in a historical sequence, but in the eschatological sense that it is the once-for-all event, the breaking into time of the new world of God, the event which brings all history and all religions into judgment. The line of revelation reaching down through the law and the prophets of Israel not only came to an end but to a crisis in Jesus Christ. He was rejected and crucified by God's chosen people who, in condemning Him, condemned themselves and brought their history to a tragic close. It was more than a Jewish tragedy, it was a world judgment.

But the world was not done with Jesus Christ. He came again and comes ever again. What happened happens, and will happen. Jesus Christ has a past and a present and a future. He stands in the middle of time, *true time, the time of God*, which is not mere passing time. He has the power of a Divine present, being the same yesterday, to-day and for ever. From the Word of God there falls a new light on what we call time, by setting it in the light of God, the Eternal. This relation of the temporal and eternal is central to the Christian Faith.

The motive power of the Christian Faith by which it has endured for nearly two thousand years, which has determined its whole labour of thought, its consciousness of its world mission, its sense of otherness in relation to the religions of the world, has sprung from the conviction that God has come in " the fulness of time " and that something all-determining has taken place on which the history of mankind depends.

Jesus Christ thus has eschatological significance for the whole human race. In His death and resurrection something happened which has had decisive meaning in the relations of God and man. It was an act of God on the verge of history which has given new meaning to history. In the light of the Word of God history is seen to march toward a crisis, not merely in history, but of history. Crisis, indeed, is shown by revelation to be the very meaning of history, and by crisis we

mean judgment. " For judgment am I come into this world " (John 9.39).

I referred to the various *scandala* which the Christian doctrine of the Word of God presents to-day to the scientist, the historian, and the philosopher; but I have made no attempt to remove them, for they lie in the nature of things.

The Christian Church deals with a different kind of " science ", or knowledge, from that of natural science. She moves in a different world and occupies herself with supernatural " science " (*theou-logos*) the knowledge of God, of which natural science disclaims all knowledge; and she believes that she has every right. Even a philosopher like A. E. Taylor declared that " theology is entitled to deal with its own very real problems without suffering its processes, or its conclusions, to be clipped and curtailed to the patterns presented in the natural sciences."

The Christian Church deals with a different kind of history also from that of the pure historian. What we call history is the story of the evolution of a sinful race, and some of our leading historians—e.g. H. A .L. Fisher—have stated that they have failed to find any pattern in it. They are recorders of the facts of history. What they actually record is the after-history. They see what has been hit by the lightning, but not the lightning itself. They can relate the later history of that " light from heaven " which struck Saul down on the Damascus Road—that conversion which had such momentous consequences. But of the light itself, which was the sword of the Word of God, they can record nothing beyond their surmise that it was a flash of lightning. The real history of that event was an inner history—revelation history—of which the historian has no knowledge.

The Christian Church deals with a different kind of philosophy from that of the professional philosopher, if it can claim to have a philosophy at all. Philosophy, as Hegel defined it, is " the thinking consideration of things ". It concerns itself with the whole—with all the facts of the universe which come within human knowledge—and strives after some unity, some world-view, some synthesis of the whole. It is the most universal of the sciences and has its own good right to pursue its problems and even to put its questions to the other sciences.

It has a right, for example, to ask the theologian that the matter on which he works be something given, and that in his reflection on it he should be true to it; but it has no right to demand more.

Philosophy is not competent to deal with revelation. It has competence to deal with movements *of* the universe, but no competence to deal with movements *to* the universe. Theology is one thing, philosophy is another thing. The one starts from God—from the Word of God—the other from man. The God-idea of the philosopher, which is reached through human thought, has nothing to do with the living God of the Bible. The actuality of the Word is utterly different from any idea worked-out, or thought-out, by philosophy. Through the Holy Spirit the Word of revelation is lifted clean out of the sphere of philosophical ideas into the sphere of personal relations, in which the *Thou* confronts the *I*. The God of revelation, of miracle, of the Holy Spirit, is the *end*, that is the crisis of science, history, and philosophy alike.

If this be the New Testament and Reformed doctrine of revelation as the Word of God, which I have tried to indicate, it is for the Church to stand by it, and witness to it, whatever be the difficulties it encounters in our day. She will not save herself by any anxious compromise with scientist, historian, or philosopher, who each have their place and right, but only by claiming her own place and right to move freely within it—the Word of God in Christ Jesus.

God is to be found where it has pleased Him that He should be found—in His Word. Not where we think that we can seek Him out for ourselves, not in the region of our possibilities, whether they are called science, or history, or reason, not where we, in our wisdom, propose to find Him, but where He in His wisdom and grace, as our Creator and Redeemer, has sought a meeting with us and taken the initiative in the sending of His Son into the world. "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared (unfolded) him."

TOWARDS A THEOLOGY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT[1]

by The Rev. Professor NORMAN W. PORTEOUS, D.D.

During the past quarter of a century the problem of Old Testament Theology has been the subject of discussion by a succession of well-known scholars (such as Rudolf Kittel, Marti, Gressmann, W. Staerk, Steuernagel, Eissfeldt, Eichrodt and Weiser) and still the debate shows no signs of coming to an end. In fact at the present time there are very deep cleavages of opinion among students of the Bible and among theologians, the consequent confusion of thought in the minds of many people leading to grave embarrassment. The question at issue is related to, though not identical with, the question as to what one has a right to expect of an Old Testament commentator. In this connection I need scarcely remind you that during the few years immediately before the War, more particularly in Germany and Switzerland, there was a tremendous amount of writing and discussion about the true nature of Biblical exegesis. The circumstances of the time, which included a violent attack delivered from certain directions upon the Old Testament, sufficiently explain why all this high debate should have taken place just then. The debate goes on and a solution is not yet in sight.

In all this, most serious theological issues are involved in so far as the present theological confusion means that many people, who are interested in the Old Testament and wish to make use of it for personal edification or in religious instruction, are sincerely perplexed by the results of Old Testament scholarship and so are inclined to set them on one side and get on with the business in hand in their own way. The paradoxical element in the situation is that, at a time when there are innumerable popular and readable books designed to communicate information about the Bible, there

[1] This paper is substantially the same as was read before the Society for Old Testament Study at an International Meeting which took place at Cardiff in September 1946. No attempt has been made to alter its original form as a lecture addressed to fellow-scholars.

should be such widespread ignorance of the Bible and its significance, and this not only among laymen, but among theological students and even among the clergy.

Without doubt the explanation of the trouble is partly to be found in the fact that many people do not see the relevance of all this information and argumentation to the Christian faith and to the practical business of Christian living. The works to which I have referred make their appeal to those who are interested in the past, but in the big majority of people there seems to be a kind of self-protective mechanism which comes into play as soon as the attempt is made to take them back into the ancient world.

It is often supposed that the thing to do to arouse interest in the Bible is to write and talk picturesquely about it. The resources of archaeology, geography and ethnology are drawn upon in the effort to make the *mise-en-scène* of the Biblical incidents as vivid as possible. The ancient world which gave us the Bible must, it is felt, be made to come alive. This is all part of the romantic attitude to the past, an attitude which, of course, has been behind some of the great achievements of Biblical scholarship. Certain people are interested but the real problem, the problem of relevance, is not solved. No amount of picturesque realism will help us here. We are, I repeat, right up against a theological issue and it is part of our business as Old Testament scholars to try to grasp the cause of the trouble. We certainly cannot afford to ignore it.

You will forgive me if I recapitulate briefly the familiar facts about the history of Old Testament Theology. As a discipline within the circle of the theological sciences it has had a somewhat curious fortune. In the period of Protestant Orthodoxy the Old Testament was mainly regarded as a collection of authoritative proof-texts which could be used by theologians to justify their particular points of view. Biblical Theology consisted of the systematic presentation of these proof-texts in the framework of a dogmatic scheme. The Old Testament moreover was regarded as being on precisely the same level as the New. Then, two hundred years ago, came the beginning of the systematic historical criticism of the Old Testament, which gradually, for all but the most conservative circles, made the old way of regarding and using the Bible

impossible. Old Testament theologies, as distinct from histories of Old Testament religion, continued indeed to be written, but, if you take the three most popular works of the kind in the latter part of last century, those by Gehler, Schultz and Dillmann, you will remember that in all three the systematic part of the book is preceded by a long section describing the course of the history of Hebrew religion. Schultz's book in particular was well known in this country. The most famous Old Testament Theology written in English was perhaps that by A. B. Davidson, which was published posthumously in 1904, and so far there has not been a successor to it on anything like the same scale.

In defining his subject Davidson writes as follows: "Old Testament Theology has been defined to be the historical and genetic presentations of the religion of the Old Testament; or, as others express it, it is that branch of theological science which has for its function to present the religion of Revelation in the ages of its progressive movement. These definitions do not differ from the one already suggested, namely, that it is the presentation of the great operation of God in bringing in the kingdom of God, so far as that operation was carried on in the Old Testament period." You will notice two things about this definition. Old Testament Theology for Davidson is virtually *Religionsgeschichte*, but, secondly, the emphasis is laid characteristically on the divine side, rather than on the human side, of the process. Davidson, however, actually adopts the systematic treatment of his subject. In doing this he was a somewhat lonely phenomenon, for in his time Old Testament Theologies almost ceased to be produced, since Old Testament scholars had come to feel that the only thing they could do was to write histories of the religion of Israel. Men's minds were dominated by the concept of evolution, a concept the application of which had had such astounding success in the field of biology. In consequence, when history was thought of after the fashion of a developing organism, it seemed impossible to treat the Old Testament in any other way than as furnishing the materials for constructing a constantly changing picture of Hebrew religious beliefs and practices. The work of a century and more had produced its inevitable result.

Then surprisingly the Theology of the Old Testament

began to revive. In 1922 there appeared in Germany a book with that title by König, and eleven years later another by Sellin. Both of these contained a long section on *Religionsgeschichte* placed before the systematic part, this latter being defined by Sellin as the systematic description of the religious teaching and belief contained in the writings collected and accepted as sacred by the Jewish community, in so far as, to use Luther's words, they "*Christum treiben*". In Sellin's opinion, then, an Old Testament Theology can be written by a Christian only from the standpoint of the Gospel, but it presupposes the historical study of the material.

In the same year in which Sellin's two-volumed work appeared the publication began of Eichrodt's monumental book. This was followed in 1936 by an Old Testament Theology on a smaller scale by another Swiss scholar, Köhler. Both these works assumed the results of *Religionsgeschichte* and confined themselves to the systematic treatment of the material.

Eichrodt, in particular, is quite explicit about what he is attempting to do. He claims to give what may be described as a cross-section of the history of Israel's religion, in which the different elements of that religion are exhibited in their inter-relationships. The historical development of these elements is not neglected but that is subordinated to the systematic method of description. The assumption made is that the religion has a set of fairly constant characteristics which distinguish it from all the other contemporary religions, so that, through all the vicissitudes of its history and amid all the changes of belief which can be documented in Israel's records, it was able to remain essentially true to type.

It has been generally recognised that Eichrodt has rendered a notable service to all students of the Old Testament, and it can further be claimed that his book has already begun to exert an influence within the field of New Testament scholarship. Not the least of his services has been his choice of the idea of the Covenant as the centre of his theological treatment, though in this he was doubtless influenced by the pioneer work of Max Weber who had recognised the importance of the Covenant for the understanding of Israel's religion from the sociological point of view. The merit of Eichrodt's choice lies in the fact that attention is thereby directed to the community

whose existence was constituted by the Covenant. It is only after he has dealt with the relation between God and people that Eichrodt proceeds to an exposition of the relation between God and Nature and that between God and Man as such.

The purpose of this paper, however, is not the appraisal of Eichrodt's great achievement but the discussion of the question whether what he has done on such a generous scale is in essence all that can properly be expected of one who claims to have written a Theology of the Old Testament. This question has in effect been answered most emphatically in the negative by a school of writers—all of them influenced theologically by Karl Barth—of whom the most notable is Wilhelm Vischer, formerly of Bethel and now of Basle.[1]

Vischer does not deny the legitimacy and indeed the necessity of the literary and historical study of the Old Testament. As a matter of fact, in the second volume of his as yet incomplete work, *Das Christuszeugnis im Alten Testament*, he makes a considerable amount of use of such criticism. What Vischer, however, is really concerned to do is to demonstrate his fundamental thesis that every part of the Old Testament must be held to be equally witness to Christ. For the exposition of the Old Testament history is indeed important, namely the history which is theologically relevant to us. Unfortunately, though his language is somewhat ambiguous, Vischer betrays the fact that he is not really interested in history in connexion with the Old Testament, when in one place he speaks of the choir of Prophets and Apostles as surrounding Christ and from opposite sides pointing to Him, while in another place he speaks of concentric circles. Barth, of whom Vischer is a follower, also thinks of Prophets and Apostles as forming semi-circles. The suspicion which Vischer's use of this figure of the circle arouses in us is deepened when we find that yet another dialectic theologian, Hellbardt, whose views about the Old Testament stand in a close relation to Vischer's, explains that the *Heilsgeschichte*, which is witnessed to in the Bible, is not a history which proceeds on the horizontal plane at all, though he rather grudgingly admits that there is of course such a history; its direction is perpendicular (Barth's *senkrecht von oben*), and it takes place between heaven and hell,

[1] Appointed since writing to Montpelier.

a rather Faust-like conception. " The *Heilsgeschichte*, of which the Old Testament speaks, has its starting-point precisely not here upon earth but in heaven, and it ends, not in the historical appearance of Christianity, but in the Conception and Birth, Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ."

The same writer waxes indignant over the historical critics' habit of speaking of the " onceness ", i.e. the uniqueness, of the historical events they study. In the Old Testament, he maintains, there is only one " onceness " which is of theological significance, and that is the onceness of Christ. If we consider any historical incident in the Old Testament, say the " sacrifice" of Isaac, or the murder of Eglon by Ehud, or the crossing of the Jordan by the Israelites under Joshua, the historical fact as such is of no theological consequence. The theological fact is the Christological one that here we have witness to the "onceness" of Christ, to His redeeming acts in their fulness. But Hellbardt goes even further than this. We are not to stop short at witness or promise. In each event that is recorded Christ is really and actually present in His full redeeming activity. In fact he advances to what Eichrodt, in a very trenchant criticism of his views, calls a belief in the " Inscripturation of the Word ". Christ, that is to say, is present in every written text of Scripture. We may be astonished, but that is what seems to be meant.

Vischer, in his exegesis of Scripture, does not actually apply the Christological principle enunciated by Hellbardt in the case of every text. That would have been an enormous task and one suspects that it would not have been at all an easy one even for one like Vischer who has a mind of quite remarkable ingenuity. One of his disciples writes that students of Vischer's, when going to his lectures, used to ask each other: " Will he practice magic again to-day ? " But it is his ingenuity rather than his soundness of judgment that one often finds oneself admiring, though it must be admitted that not infrequently he throws out a really illuminating suggestion.

Vischer is much more cautious than Hellbardt in what he says about witness to Christ in the Old Testament. The latter speaks quite definitely of actual appearances of Christ. Vischer takes refuge in ambiguity, as, for example, in his exegesis of the passage about Melchizedek in Genesis 14, where it is almost

impossible to be sure what he really means. In one instance, however, he seems to come out into the open and state explicitly that the mysterious stranger with whom Jacob wrestled by the Jabbok was actually Christ. We are therefore justified in assuming a certain measure of fundamental agreement between these two scholars on this point.

It does not surprise us when we find Hellbardt treating the concept of time as virtually irrelevant to theology. In fact, he seems to think that the dignity of exegesis depends on the extent to which we do exclude the concept of time, and he goes so far as to declare that it is, from the theological point of view of very little importance that Jesus appeared on earth in temporal sequence *after* the Old Testament period. It will, however, simply not do to say that, instead of the unique fact of Jesus' life in Palestine at the beginning of what we call the Christian era, we get in compensation His real existence in every historical event at every time. This kind of unhistorical thinking is neither Biblical nor Christian and, as Eichrodt rightly points out, is akin to the speculations of Philo with their obvious colouring from Greek philosophy. *This* is certainly not the way to escape from the errors of *Historismus*. It would be unfair to assume that Hellbardt's views and Vischer's are identical, but what the former says in his uncompromising fashion is at least of significance as showing the way in which the wind is blowing. Hellbardt definitely, and Vischer in at least one instance, seem to bring Christ like a ghost on to the stage of the Old Testament, and one may not unfairly add that He finds there nothing but ghosts. Deny the importance of the time sequence of history, and you get an unreal world of shadows with a deity who is almost as shadowy. In fact there is more to be said for the Hegelian brand of theology, which at least recognises movement, than for a theology which seeks to exclude history altogether. Moreover the method and presuppositions of both Vischer and Hellbardt open the door to the wildest allegorising and supply no real check upon it. There is, I believe, a very real sense in which the New Testament may be regarded as the fulfilment of the Old—in fact it is one of the fundamental tenets of Christianity that this is so—but Vischer and those who think with him, acting in all sincerity and with a motive for which

we can have respect, especially when we remember the dangers against which they were contending, have taken a short cut which is theologically most questionable. It should also be added that there is much in Vischer's books in particular that is suggestive and valuable. Only he must be read with caution.[1]

At this point it must be stated that the whole question of the relation between the Testaments is of very great importance and has of recent years been attracting the increasing attention of scholars. But the handling of this difficult topic requires sobriety of judgment and the avoidance of *a priori* assumptions, and nothing is to be gained by turning the Old Testament into an elaborate cipher which it is the job of the Old Testament expositor and theologian to decode. There is surely something wrong about a method of exposition which draws one's attention first and foremost to the ingenuity of the expositor, especially when that ingenuity is directed to reducing the whole of the Old Testament to a single monotonous level of identical meaning.

In a recent challenging book entitled *The Authority of the Biblical Revelation*, Professor Cunliffe-Jones takes Biblical scholars to task for their failure to provide an adequate theological doctrine of the Bible. He accepts without reserve the historical approach to the Bible and declares that the historical critics have been completely successful in their controversy with the fundamentalists. The trouble, as he sees it, is that the critics have for the most part been content to stop short at their historical investigations and so, great as their service to the cause of truth has been, they have failed to show how their historical results should be taken up into a positive theological exposition of the Bible. His plea is for what he calls interaction between the historical and the theological ways of treating Scripture. With regard to the exposition of any particular passage he says that " there are three questions which must be considered. First, what is the original meaning of its author and what is its relation to his own time? Second, what is the meaning of the passage in

[1] See now Emil Brunner: *Revelation and Reason*, note on pp. 81 and 82. The original German edition of this work was published in 1941, but did not then come to the present writer's notice.

relation to the whole historical movement covered by the Old and New Testaments? Third, what is the meaning of the passage as part of the witness to the absolute Revelation of God in Jesus Christ our Lord?"[1]

So far as the third of these questions is concerned, I gather that he would not go nearly as far as Vischer, for he recognises the danger of artificial interpretations. On this point, however, one is inclined to suspend judgment until one sees how he will handle Scripture in the Commentary on the Book of Deuteronomy which he promises us. Perhaps most of us could agree with him when he says:[2] "The Old Testament is the Story of God and of the people of God, and it is the Story of Israel which testifies of Christ. Jesus Christ is Israel concentrated in Himself and freed from imperfection, and all that is said of the true Israel is made more glorious by the coming of the Son of Man."

Where Professor Cunliffe-Jones's views deserve our particular attention in the context of this paper is where he declares that what we need to-day is a Theology of the Word rather than a Theology of Response. "Are the Biblical writings authoritative," he says,[3] "because they are the finest expressions of religious experience interpenetrated with the divine, or are they authoritative because they are witness to that which must govern as well as quicken religious experience?" He means that in Biblical Theology the emphasis must be laid on the objective Word of God which is normative for all Christian experience and is therefore not to be measured by the imperfect response which men make to the Word.

Now there is a way of speaking about religious experience which arouses in me the same kind of reaction as that indicated by the words I have quoted. The Bible is sometimes expounded as if it were a kind of text-book of piety. In this ancient book, we are told, is to be found the experience of those who were religious geniuses, men who had a special aptitude for religion, and we can learn to deepen our own religious experience by entering into theirs. The religious life is like the practice of one of the arts and by the use of the

[1] *The Authority of the Biblical Revelation*, p. 11.
[2] Loc. cit., p. 49. [3] Loc. cit., p. 66.

Bible it is possible for us, as it were, to sit at the feet of the great masters of the art of religion. The Bible in short is an elaborate *ashram* in book form.

Well, as I said, I sympathise with Cunliffe-Jones's reaction against this type of theology. But surely it is no less a mistake to minimise the response in faith and obedience which men make to the Word of God. Certainly the Word is primary and the response secondary to the Word to which it is a response. The religious fact, however, with which the Bible deals is that a Word is spoken and received and the reception of the Word is surely a form of religious experience. It is not that the response is the measure of the Word, but it is just because there is a response, a witness to the Word, that we can hear that Word spoken to ourselves. To point out, as we must do, how partial and imperfect the response often was, is not to make the response a measure of the Word spoken but rather to emphasise the sovereignty of a Word which out of such variety of material was able to fashion a new thing in the world, a people which constituted a new kind of fellowship. It is in my view the business of a Theology of the Old Testament to illumine the Old Testament primarily from this point of view, because it was through this relationship between God and His people that revelation chiefly came to Israel. The prophet, for example, is of significance, not because he had some very special type of experience which other men less richly endowed can share only to a very partial extent, but because a Word of God came to him which was meant for all Israel, and he learned to look to God to enable all men to receive it as he himself had been enabled to do. Moreover, the capacity of the prophet to receive the Word and respond to it was not unconnected with the fact that he had been reared in the tradition of this people, the tradition that was transmitted in those circles to which the prophets belonged and which the prophets themselves sought to perpetuate. The tradition might at times be cherished merely by a remnant within the empirical Israel, but that remant incorporated the meaning which was the *raison d'être* of Israel's existence and as the bearer of which she fulfilled her tragic destiny.

In the magnificent book which the late Principal Wheeler Robinson has left as a legacy, this thought of the centrality of

Israel, the people of God, for Old Testament Theology is clearly expressed:[1] " The supreme and unifying theme of the Old Testament is God, as Creator, Ruler and Redeemer. Yet that obvious truth would be incomplete and indeed misleading unless we said, not only ' God,' but ' the God of Israel '. The revelation of God is bound up with a history, the national and individual experiences of a particular people." Wheeler Robinson realises very clearly that revelation in the Old Testament came not as a series of propositions about God but through a disclosure of God within a personal fellowship. The fellowship, of course, is that which was created by God within His ancient people. It is a little strange, then, that at the very end of his book he turns back to a conception of what a Theology of the Old Testament should be which shows how difficult it is to break away from traditional methods. He writes:[2] "As for the content of the revelation (in distinction from its form), it is inevitable that we should state this in a series of propositions to constitute a ' Theology of the Old Testament ', even if they are arranged in historical order, and called a ' History of the Religion of Israel '. If they are stated topically, and not chronologically, as a ' theology ' requires, they become still more abstract and remote from the once-living, vibrating and dynamic religion of Israel. Let us constantly remind ourselves that this religion, like any other, can be understood only from within, or through a sympathy that makes us its ' resident aliens ' (*gerim*)."

It is obvious, of course, that writing of any kind whatsoever involves a series of propositions. I would, however, venture to suggest that in writing a Theology of the Old Testament some way must be found to avoid this abandonment of the concrete which we have when life is petrified into a series of propositions expressive of the ideas which men in Israel held about this, that and the other topic, though of course some systematised description of belief has its proper place within a theological treatment. The business of a Theology of the Old Testament is to keep us continually aware of God's activity in Israel's history, and, as that activity consisted in the creation and maintenance of a community, to

[1] *Inspiration and Revelation in the Old Testament*, p. 148.
[2] Op. cit., pp. 281-2.

make us see that community as the thing that binds all the varied witness of the Old Testament writers together in a unity of faith. It should be made clear that the witness which we have in the Old Testament and the experience of God which the Old Testament mirrors for us are the witness and experience, not only of the great masters of religion, but also of quite ordinary people. The great miracle of the Old Testament is what God did with these ordinary people, just as the great miracle of the New Testament, after the supreme miracle of Christ Himself, is the welding together of a new community out of very unpromising material.

A Theology of the Old Testament will take account of contemporary investigations into the psychology of the Hebrews, into the nature of prophecy, and into the character of the Hebrew cult, not excluding its relation to analogous phenomena elsewhere. It will base itself on careful philological discussion of the meaning of religious terms, seeking to be as completely at home as possible in the Old Testament world of thought. Although, as Pedersen has reminded us, we are perhaps no longer entitled to be so confident that we can date much of the material in the Old Testament with any high degree of accuracy, we need not be unduly concerned, since such dating is now felt to be much less important than the recognition of those features of Israel's life and religion which over long periods of time were virtually constants. All these enquiries help us to realise, on the one hand, among what kind of people the miracle of Israel's faith was awakened, and to appreciate, on the other hand, the nature of that new thing which was working within the ancient pattern.

That new thing was associated with a tradition which was in line with one of the great revolutionary movements of history. The old culture pattern of the world to which Israel belonged and to which she was bound by so many ties of cultural and religious influence was in process of breaking down, and history was moving towards a new synthesis to replace the one which, because its defects could no longer be endured, had proved unstable. The secret of Israel's success in helping to bring about this new synthesis lay not so much in the fact that men like the Hebrew prophets thought out a new philosophy or grasped it by a flash of intuition, but that

within Israel a new type of community was in actual process of construction. The contribution of the prophets consisted in their deepening of men's understanding of what was already there, albeit in miniature, and that new thing was not a system of ideas but a fellowship of people. No Theology of the Old Testament is adequate which does not keep us close to the stuff of real life, ordinary life, which is that out of which history is chiefly made. The reason why the Old Testament is being rediscovered to-day is that in it we can see God actually at work in the lives of men and women. Moreover, we as Christians believe ourselves able to recognise that what He did in Old Testament times was an indivisible part of what He did and does within the Christian Church. A Theology of the Old Testament should do justice to the fact that the faith of Israel looked for the realisation of a Kingdom of God in this world and should remind us that a version of Christianity which compromises with the world by removing the true community of God's children largely to some supra-mundane sphere and which turns the knowledge of God into something not involving a surrender of mind and heart and will, is not in line with the great driving forces of history which move towards a religion that really counts or towards none at all.

One last point. I believe that, in this business of working out a Theology of the Old Testament, we shall have to give a due place to the Hebrew religious tradition, since, whatever violence it does to the actual sequence of Israel's history, as modern historical science has reconstructed it, it does express the meaning of that history as Israel itself conceived it, thereby making it a potent factor in the subsequent history of the world. There are, of course, grave difficulties to be faced here and they must be faced frankly. The Old Testament way of setting forth the meaning of Israel's history is to give us a *Heilsgeschichte* which is related to the actual course of Israel's history somewhat as a portrait is related to a photograph. That the Old Testament portrait does express the ultimate truth about Israel is, of course, something which may be either accepted or denied. But, whatever view we take of Israel's history, it is only within the context of faith, whether Jewish or Christian, that a Theology of the Old Testament can be written. It is quite impossible to be entirely without presuppositions in essaying

such a task. That is true even of the scholar who says that he adopts no positive attitude to the Old Testament at all. It belongs to faith, however, not to read into the Old Testament what is not there, but so to exhibit what is there that the relevance of the Old Testament will be made clear. It is the purpose of a Theology of the Old Testament to guide the systematic theologian in his use of the Old Testament. There must be no glossing over of the fact that within the Old Testament there are differences and even contradictions between the several parts. The unity is not on the surface nor is it to be attained by a subtle dialectic. Rather is it to be found in the concrete reality of a community based on fellowship with God, created and maintained by Him to express His will. Here is the divine reagent which has changed the pattern of human life and will change it again. It is in relation to this unique centre of Israel's life that her distinctive beliefs about the world and existence in it must be expounded with all due regard to the interpenetration of her life and thought by the life and thought within which she provided the leaven of what was new. The pivots on which a Theology of the Old Testament turns are God and His people, God paramount but choosing primarily to make Himself known as the Living God in this unique relationship.

THE PROCLAMATION OF THE CHURCH TO THE CONGREGATION

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The text of a lecture delivered in German by the author in September 1944 in the Church of the village of Riehen at the Conference of Members of the Church Courts and Commissions and the Officials, Presidents and Directors of the Parish Choirs of Basle, and in English in January 1948 before the Theological Faculties of the Universities of Cambridge and Manchester. The English translation is by the Rev. James W. Leitch, B.D.

If one desired to master such a comprehensive theme as that of the Proclamation of the Church to the Congregation, so many points of view press themselves forward that it is puzzling to know where a beginning should first be made in order to obtain a comprehensive view of so kaleidoscopic a picture. Here, however, the purpose is more modest and unassuming. We concern ourselves with a few aspects, in order to grasp a rich and complex subject with such powers of reflection and understanding as have been given us.

The question whether the Church's proclamation is concerned with something difficult and therefore difficult to understand or rather with something easy and therefore easily understandable, is as old as the proclamation itself.

The apostle Paul, the Spirit-filled proclaimer of the New Covenant, writes to his congregation in Corinth: "And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified" (1 Cor. 2.1-2). But then from the congregation there comes this echo: "His letters, say they, are weighty and powerful; but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible" (2 Cor. 10.10). We do well to stop here and consider the meaning of such a comparison. The apostle's proclamation of the testimony of God, so deliberately concentrated on, and reduced to, the crucified Christ, appears

" weighty and powerful " to his hearers and readers; but the proclaimer himself " weak, and his speech contemptible ". And this same proclaimer knew and emphasised the fact beforehand: with " excellence of speech, or of wisdom " he was *not* concerned. The hearer who expects this from the proclaimer of the Gospel is on the wrong road from the start. Why? Because the decisive question concerns not the proclaimer but the proclamation. He who fails to grasp this finds himself on the false track of the Corinthian factions, which only leads to respect for Apollos, as the better, because more skilful, orator, or even for Peter, as the more famous, because apparently specially authoritative, original apostle. It leads thereby to contempt not only for Paul but also for his proclamation, though this proclamation is the unambiguous inescapable task imposed on every real proclaimer of the Gospel.

It is in keeping with this that the whole New Testament speaks only three times of the *proclaimer* of the Gospel, but more than sixty times of *proclaiming*, and in addition eight times of *proclamation*, where proclaiming and proclamation are linguistically and conceptually the same. Moreover, the Greek word (*kerygma*) used in the Bible is an extremely solemn one. It describes the office of the herald, who loudly and clearly publishes the message delivered to him. Proclamation is properly heraldic publication.

That Christian proclamation is nothing other than public proclamation of the living God whose Will is directed upon the whole world, is a fact which we do not properly realise to-day because in our current translations of the Bible " preach " is almost always read in the passages concerned instead of " proclaim ". But the word " preach " as it is used and understood to-day does not bear the force and significance of heraldic proclamation. In earlier times it was different. The Vulgate, the official Bible of the Roman Catholic Church, invariably uses for the biblical " proclaim " the word *praedicare*, which means " publish ", " make public ", also " extol ", " laud ", " glorify ". The English word " preach " is derived from this Latin *praedicare* and ought therefore to have its original sense restored to it.

What follows further from these linguistic considerations? Much of essential importance. Preaching as proclamation, as

it should be within the congregation in Divine Service, is, in its appointed aim and purpose, not limited to the congregation. It breaks through its bounds and thrusts out into the open. Its intensity is extensity. Inward force and tension change into outward (though external) expansion and extension. The claim to open publicity is fundamentally characteristic of the Gospel. Just the other day I read the following sentence in a weekly paper, in the sketch of a so-called " Party Programme " of the Individualists: " The separation of Church and State . . . must become more complete, in order that religion may lose all that is sociological and in the end all that is ' alarming '." Apart from the snares of any such proclamation of the Gospel, which we cannot and may not consider here, it must at least be said that an emasculation arrived at in such a way is the complete contradiction of proclamation as the Bible understands it. What claim does the proclamation of the biblical Church make?

In this connexion the fact that Christian preaching is consciously public proclamation makes it possible, and at the same time necessary, for us to understand the Christian Congregation as the Church. That Church and Congregation are ultimately the same is evident in both the language and the facts of the Bible of the Old and New Testaments. Whereas we are accustomed to speak sometimes of the Church, sometimes of the Congregation, the whole New Testament has always the same expression for both—an expression which means neither more nor less than " assembly, flock, people, company of God "—the customary expression of the Greek world for " national assembly " qualified by the Old Testament addition " of God ". Where this addition is lacking, it is nevertheless always to be understood. And to think of God, to speak of God, has only meaning if the God of the Old and of the New Covenant moves into our field of vision. That is the explanation of the fact that the Church, the Congregation of the New Covenant, is addressed as the true Israel with titles from the Book of the Old Covenant.

We can bring the biblical connexion of terms home to our minds from an apostolic statement in which the word "Church" does not appear, but in which it is spoken of in no unduly excessive or extravagant Old Testament terms and the Church's

office of proclamation is concisely and firmly outlined. In 1 Peter, 2.9-11, we read: " But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God; which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy. Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims . . ." Thus, without the word " Church " or " congregation " so current among us (indeed all too current and yet also disputed), there is here the triumph of the thing itself—the thing on which we cannot reflect enough, and to which a hymn is here sung. With its sweep from kingship to pilgrimage it is at once exalted and humble, because a gift of God is entrusted to us men. The exaltedness and majesty of the Church remain sure, however unsure we men, taken by ourselves, in our humbleness and unworthiness, may be. Because the majesty of the Church as the *divine* assembly of men is unshakable, we men are charged with the burden of responsibility and thereby singled out for distinction: it is demanded of us as the chosen race, the kingly priesthood, the holy nation, the peculiar people, that we *should* proclaim the excellencies of God, and therefore not our own excellencies which, even if they exist, are poor, dark and empty compared with the richness, the splendour and the fulness of God. The aretalogy, i.e. teaching on excellence, of the self-assured man of every time and every place melts away before the aretalogy of God, whose excellences we are to publish abroad. (This strengthened synonym for " proclaim " occurs only in this one passage in the New Testament.) The aim and power of the Gospel proclamation is, that the hearers should be able to say, " We do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God ", as it is told in the record of the first public Christian sermon at Pentecost (Acts 2.11).

In the world there have been and are races, priesthoods, nations, peoples of various kinds and many degrees of worth and worthlessness. But there has been and is only *one* elect race, only *one* royal priesthood, only *one* holy nation, only *one* peculiar people. This is, may be, and must be the Church, as God has founded it in Jesus Christ. The real Church is God's own peculiar possession. Precisely that is what the

apostle Paul means when at the end of his life's work he urges the pastors whom he was leaving behind to " feed the assembly (congregation, Church) of God, which he has made his own through his blood " (Acts 20.28). The Old Testament Psalmist had already spoken similarly: God " remember thy congregation (the Hebrew and Greek texts have here the word ' synagogue ', which makes no difference as it also refers to the assembly of God), which thou hast purchased of old " (Psalm 74.2). This prayer to God for the building and preserving of His assembly has never ceased and must never cease. What was promised to the devout men of the Old Covenant is fulfilled in the New Covenant, because it is of the essence of God to remain true to the human children He has created and thereby to Himself, even when more and more of them have fallen away from their only Lord, so that finally only a " holy remnant " remains, whose ears and eyes are open to the words and actions of Jesus, and in whose midst the treasure of the Christian Sacraments, Baptism and the Lord's Supper, lies stored. God made this, His only Son, the true Messiah of His people, unspeakably humble, that He might enter in among humble men, that this costly treasure should be made visible in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power should belong to God and not derive from men (cf. 2 Cor. 4.7).

The positive fact that the Church was conceived and created by God—that we men have been accepted by Him as His own and adopted as His children—has its negative side in the fact that the Church has not come into being like any other natural or historical structure. All this together points to the fact that the Church struggles and endures in opposition to this world. This cannot be otherwise, because in our midst the beginning-time and end-time of the God of all eternity stand opposed to this time-series, because the other Kingdom, the Kingdom of God, breaks up this world and its kingdoms without being able here and now completely to supersede them. The reversal of all values, which in the end-time will become reality as the Lordship of God, has been displayed in this time-series and in this world *once*, i.e. once for all, in the appearance of Jesus Christ, who met with rejection, insult and death from the authorities of His own people, but remained through this death the Victor who rose and is to come again. Until the Christ

who has gone from us returns at the Last Day, the Church, like His distinguished apostle, bears as the Body of Christ the " marks of Christ " in her body (cf. Gal. 6.17). If with the Church as the *divine* assembly *of men* exaltedness and humbleness, sovereignty and subjection are combined, then God's gift is our task: His grace judges us, His joy reveals and removes our anxiety, His freedom our bondage, His claim our limitations, His greatness our insignificance, His riches our poverty, His wholeness our division. If judgment, anxiety, bondage, limitations, insignificance, poverty, division are to disappear, that can only happen in view of the God who has made His Christ the Head of His Church, of His people.

The fact that Jesus Christ was of Jewish lineage constitutes the clearest mark of the Church's origin in her relation to Israel as the chosen people. Israel's service to Christian and non-Christian mankind as God's gift to them cannot be removed or obscured. Thus it is true that a constant promise remains also for the " Israel after the flesh " which has so far not entered the fellowship of Christ, i.e., for Jewry of to-day. To the Israel after the flesh as God's people there is no analogy in the whole world. Whereas all peoples understand themselves as dependent on blood, land and history (incidentally, history as a spiritual process should have precedence over all biological considerations), it is different with Israel. Here is a people which in itself has the disposition and endowments of any other more or less kindred people. But this insignificant people in insignificant Palestine was not allowed to lead its life according to its own conditions in the manner of other peoples, but as it were outside of itself, in dependence on God's commandments. This people has always retained something of the wilderness generation—and this is true also of its secular, and particularly of its economic, history. The occupation of Canaan by the ancient Israelites brought a desert people into contact with peoples of a higher culture and at the same time of essentially the same race. The external conflict was followed through the centuries by an internal conflict, in that they were not permitted to merge with the peoples of the near-Asiatic world, either by wars or through alliances. The Lawgiver Moses and the prophets who followed him stamped upon the life of this people a respect for nothing but the Law of God and the

promise bound up with it. It meant a struggle, which again and again threatened to be lost, when this people suddenly wanted to have a king like the other peoples, and when in the later Syrian and Greek periods assimilation to the great world-culture was attempted. The only thing which stands between the Judaism built up in this struggle as a so-called religion of law, and Christianity as a so-called religion of redemption, is the question of the Messiah. The saying of the Baptist against the Jewish and Pharisaic desire for distinction, that God is able of these stones to raise up children to Abraham (Matt. 3.9), and the commendation of the heathen soldier by Jesus, who had not found such faith in Israel (Matt. 8.10), refer to the Messiahship of Jesus of Nazareth which remained a stumbling-block to the hardened Jews. In this way it came about that the Church of God in Jesus Christ became the proper, the true, the spiritual Israel, which the Israel after the flesh, as determined decisively not through its flesh but through God's election and call, ought to have set forth. The passage from the First Epistle of Peter which I cited above consists not without reason almost completely in verbal citation of the Old Testament.

The fuller the terms in which the Church is spoken of in the New Testament, and the richer their associations, the barer and poorer are they in *one* respect. A few other synonymous terms do occur, such as " house of God ", " spiritual house ", " flock ", which again derive from the Old Testament. But in the New Testament the embellishing adjectives (*epitheta ornantia*) for the Church are almost completely lacking. In the sphere of the Church the only possible embellishment is, that God in Jesus Christ be praised, preached and proclaimed.

We men should look thoughtfully and thankfully at life *without* the Church and life *with* it. We should reflect that we were once not the people of God, that is, not the Church. We should be thankful that we have become this, and that we have thereby received grace and mercy.

Such an attitude forbids us to set forth on our own as quantity what is bestowed on us as quality. Whereas a mere human assembly even of a spiritual kind is a sum of individual parts, so that in this respect only the union of several individual congregations would weld the Church as a whole congregation,

the Church as the assembly of God is in reality independent of numbers and also of organisation. In other words, the Church in the full sense of the term exists wherever the smallest company of true believers in Christ is assembled. " Where two or three are gathered together in my Name, there am I in the midst of them ", says Jesus Christ Himself (Matt. 18.20). Thus the humblest house congregation can be the Church whereas a formal Church, be it ever so great, is not necessarily so. When Paul addresses his Corinthians as " the Church of God which is in Corinth ", the thought is not of the Corinthian congregation alongside other congregations, in the sense that only the uniting of different congregations would produce the Church; it is rather of *the* assembly, *the* congregation, *the* Church, as it is in Corinth. Because this is so and not otherwise, the author of the First Epistle of Peter, in writing to his Christian brethren, who are scattered over different districts and whose number and organisation are unknown to us, can venture to address them as *the* people of God, as *the* Church.

But now, to belong to those who are marked out as the people of God means at once to belong to those who are marked as strangers and pilgrims on earth. This is only an impressive formulation of what has already met us in our consideration of Israel as the People of God. In fact there is also here a citation from the Old Testament. Sadly, yet not without consolation, the Psalmist speaks thus of his existence before God in the world: " For I am a stranger with thee, a sojourner as all my fathers were " (Ps. 39.12). Yes, all the fathers of Israel and the whole people of Israel were ever in a strange land. In his review of the history of Israel's disasters and deliverances the first Christian martyr, Stephen, quotes God's word to Abraham that " his seed would be sojourners in a strange land " (Acts 7.6). The word Luther likes to translate " pilgrim " is strictly the " sojourner " in the legal sense. Such a stranger and sojourner was Abraham in the land which God promised to him, after he had left home and kindred and wandered thither at God's command. This existence of Abraham, who as stranger and sojourner was the obedient man of faith, was much reflected upon in the Christian Church and seen as the pattern and example of the existence of the Christian. This theme is central in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews, where

Abraham and the other figures of faith of the Old Covenant are presented. We quote from it only two sentences (verses 9 and 10), which require no further commentary: " By faith he (Abraham) sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise. For he looked for the city (*polis*) which has (the right) foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God."

. . . .

The enquiry has concerned the Church, the congregation, the people of God, the true Israel bent on heavenly citizenship. From this enquiry, what conclusions follow for the relation between Church and congregation? This question has perhaps to some extent been discarded; but, since the subject given me is " The Proclamation of the Church to the Congregation ", it is still a live issue for many. If we begin by representing the sermon in worship as public proclamation, what remains still to be said of possible special proclamation to those who are estranged from the Church? Finally, what is to be said of the form and content of the Church's proclamation in general, so far as it has not already been dealt with (as according to our purpose it had to be) in our discussion of the form and content of the Church?

1. The fact that there are individual congregations which, existing in a particular circle as house congregations, or in a particular place without organised connexion with other congregations, represent the whole congregation (i.e. the Church) must not be understood in the sense of Congregationalism. Congregationalists, who find in the New Testament the pattern for their Church constitution, according to which all their congregations are wholly independent of each other, completely misunderstand the New Testament congregation.

However weak the constitution and organisation of a whole Congregation embracing all Christians may appear to be in the primitive Church, yet this much is to be noted. Over and above the inner unity which exists as a matter of course in common faith and hope, proclamation and confession, instruction and exhortation, there are in the apostolic Church outward relationships derived from this inner bond and given practical expression through it. There is for one thing the honour and

respect paid to the Jewish-Christian Mother Church in Jerusalem. This is exemplified even in the apostle Paul, who, struggling and conquering as representative of Gentile Christianity, also submitted, and devoted himself in the midst of all differences of opinion to the collection for the poor in Jesusalem. There is further the uniting of the different widely-scattered congregations through mutual exchange. This exchange takes place in journeys and visits, in letters, in intercession for each other on such occasions. And if such occasions do not offer themselves, then intercession, which as prayer is independent of the external resources of eye and ear, is none the less naturally practised, and with even special intensity. I do not require to mention any individual passage from Acts or the early Christian Epistles in support of all this. Let me only refer to one particularly eloquent detail: the purpose of the important *Epistle to the Romans* lies simply in the fact that Paul had and expressed the wish and request that he might make a halt with the Roman congregation on his projected Spanish journey, and be brought on his way by this congregation: " For I hope to see you in my journey, and to be brought on my way thitherward (to Spain) by you, if first I be somewhat filled with your company " (Rom. 15.24).

From this point of view it is easy to understand why hospitality is so often mentioned as a special Christian virtue: " distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality " (Rom. 12.13). This exhortation appears so important that it is even given the honour of special scriptural proof: " Be not forgetful to entertain strangers; for thereby some have entertained angels unawares " (Heb. 13.2, recalling the story of the entertaining of the angels by Abraham).

The early Christian congregations already stood together through this very hospitality towards the brethren who travelled to and fro between the individual congregations (the apostles in the narrower and the wider sense), which is again and again urged upon them. This naturally produced a certain organisation if only for the sake of the necessary order. It was at once important for the exchange between individual congregations to have specially commissioned people—leading figures like the apostles, alongside of them their fellow-workers, and after them other functionaries also. At any rate, if the Gospel

is proclaimed *to* or *into* the congregation, then it takes place *in* the congregation, which is fundamentally the same congregation even if it be another congregation, separated by locality and therefore by organisation, that is concerned. Moreover the statement " *in* the congregation " which we have just made does not mean a fixed, limited circle which we could perhaps widen or even narrow, as in the case of a club, but always something whose substance as a whole is imperilled.

We can make this clear to ourselves in considering the process of edification. The congregation in its connexion with other congregations and thereby with the whole of God's people has long been built up or edified, but at the same time must ever be built up or edified again. So-called edification is at once the foundation and the end. Immediately before the passage on the Church of which we have spoken, the First Epistle of Peter says: " And let yourselves also, as living stones, be built up (edified) as a spiritual house " (2.5). That is a very peculiar demand, in which the picture is strained for the sake of the subject-matter. But more important is the imperative intended, which in plain language is: " Become what you are; be what you are; remain what you are ".

This is the reason also for the repeated summons to stand, to stand fast, to remain, in the salvation bestowed on men by God. The pointed warning of John the Elder belongs here: " Whosoever ' takes the lead ' and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ, has not God; he who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son " (2 John 9). By " whosoever ' takes the lead ' " may be intended in the original Greek text (the A.V. here follows a less well attested text) a favourite expression of the false teachers he was attacking, who as Gnostics want to be people who make progress. From this point of view it is a questionable expedient to speak of Church progress. Everything indeed depends on the fact that Jesus Christ and the blessings of the salvation bestowed in Him " take the lead ", that Jesus Christ does not " pass over " us men.

2. Can we and may we then also say that the proclamation has to proceed *outwards from* the congregation? The answer is certainly Yes. How could it be otherwise? It is exactly the same, only more anonymously, with the congregation claimed for God's cause as with the well-known prophets and apostles

who devoted themselves to God's cause. No true prophet or apostle is then inspired by the thought that he has to proclaim what lies on his own heart, what he himself has thought out, what he has striven for. It has in fact precisely nothing to do with his own feeling, thought and will. Isaiah feels himself unworthy to deliver God's message. Jeremiah curses the day of his birth, because in this way he was called to the prophet's life under the necessity of passing on God's message. Paul says: " For though I proclaim the Gospel, I have nothing to glory of; for necessity is laid upon me; for woe is unto me if I do not proclaim the Gospel " (1 Cor. 9.16). We are driven to the conclusion that, just as the proclamation of the Gospel is imposed on every man chosen by God as His instrument, so also it is the concern of all men, the members of Church congregations *and* those who are estranged from the Church.

The question is raised whether the proclamation to Church people in the congregation has to be different from the proclamation by the congregation to those who stand without. What we have previously affirmed has really answered this question in the negative. So far as anything still remains to be asked and answered, it can only concern the question of form, which in a technical sense (if we may call it so) must certainly be taken seriously, but which in a material sense is not of primary importance. How much, i.e., how little, this question engaged the attention of the primitive Church is shown by the passage where Paul is giving an account of himself to the elders of Ephesus, when the apostle emphasises that he had delivered the message, that is just the same message, " publicly and from house to house " (Acts 20.20). That as regards the form it must have been done differently in public before the outsiders and in the more or less closed congregational assembly, could perhaps be supported by the remark about the work of Apollos: " He mightily convinced (in argument) the Jews, and that publicly, shewing by the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ " (Acts 18.28). But let us be duly cautious in emphasising a somewhat apologetic form of mission work. The mental task of Scripture proof is demanded of every Christian in the New Testament proclamation. This is especially clear in the Epistle to the Romans. There the Roman Gentile Christians have on the one hand been long

ago called to be Christians and so stand within the congregation; yet on the other hand they are still Christians not yet well enough informed, and so in a certain sense still stand without and not sufficiently within. The ignorant, those who are not yet sufficiently acquainted with God's plan of salvation, are in fact still, and always, the Christians themselves, so that they must be taught. They, the Christians, have often in their understanding fallen *away* from the Church of God in Jesus Christ just as much as others have not yet come *to* it.

What about those who clearly stand without? Should not Paul's speech on the Areopagus, as the one quite clear example of a missionary address to complete outsiders, provide us here with a different picture? The world-famous public place in Athens is here not so important. For even for the congregational sermon the question of place is of no consequence, for the simple reason that the real congregation is not produced by place but by its being assembled in the Spirit of God. The only thing which could be important is what we may call the inner situation. What is the implication of the manner of the proclamation to the philosophers who stood without? Was something different proclaimed here from elsewhere? Could or must the proclamation be different here from elsewhere? The end of the speech on the Areopagus, after certain preliminary connecting links, is at any rate a completely uncompromising trumpet-call, ringing stridently in the ears of these sages: You are ignorant and must repent like all other men; for God will one day judge the whole world by a Man whom He has raised from the dead (Acts 17.30, 31).

3. But that now brings us back once more to one and the same proclamation as public proclamation of God founded on the Old and New Covenants. To the perplexed philosophers of Athens, as to all their successors to this day, this message of Christ, of His Death and of His Resurrection, came as something distasteful, as well as most embarrassing—in a word, unreasonable.

How is the proclaimer of the Gospel to meet this objection? In the enthralling, scriptural and up-to-date lecture of a theologian on " The Promise and Responsibility of the Christian Congregation in the Events of our Time ", I read the following sentences the other day: " He (Jesus) comforts them (men)

quite simply by the fact that He stands before their eyes as the Lord who has risen from the dead and has overcome the world in which they are afraid." One comes across such a " quite simply " or " quite plainly " or " quite clearly " very often in the language of present-day theologians and preachers. It frequently sounds somewhat brusque. One feels reminded of a father or a teacher reproaching a child who cannot or will not understand something and telling him perplexedly or even brusquely that it really is quite simply like this and not otherwise. It may also happen that this " quite simply " is kind and motherly and benefits the person so addressed because he can now take his stand on the saying, " What no understanding of the prudent can see is practised in simplicity by a child-like mind ".[1] (That these lines of Schiller have also another contact with the Biblical proclamation is seen from the fact that " the understanding of the prudent " comes from 1 Cor. 1.19.)

But now, how does God meet us men in this connexion? This stern and loving Father has certainly every reason to confront His obdurate human child with His " quite simply ". The prayer of Matthias Claudius, " Make us simple ", when rightly understood, answers to Jesus' demand for the " single eye " (Matt. 6.22) and to the demand for " simplicity in Christ " of which Paul speaks in contradistinction from all human subterfuges and cunning devices of interpretation since Adam and Eve (2 Cor. 11.3). In actual fact the speech and action of the God who strides through the history of every individual man and of humanity is so rich that we men must just once for all become simple, and patient and sober as well, not dogmatic and not agitated. The Bible's acknowledgment already mentioned—that God is rich and we men poor—answers to the richness of God's message, as it is to be passed on by the Church, and the poverty of mortal, fallen man, who lives by faith and hope alone.

As regards more or less synonymous parallels and supplementary expressions in the language of the New Testament for the word " proclaim ", there are the greatest conceivable resources to draw upon. So manifold are the resources of human language to express the richness and the sharpness

[1] Und was kein Verstand der Verständigen sieht,
Das übet in Einfalt ein kindlich Gemüt.

and the mildness of God's Word. Besides " proclaim " in the sense of proper " preaching ", there are " communicate ", " announce ", " reveal ", with " unveil " to crown the series; but in addition there are also " teach ", " persuade ", " convince ", " exhort ", " comfort ", " command "—all valid descriptions of an inclusive complex, which is worthy to be extolled also in the language of our " psalms and hymns and spiritual songs " (Col. 3.16).

Man should accept this inspiring richness with soberness, i.e. with clear vigilance, and in patience, i.e. in alert readiness. If the Spirit of God is not to be quenched for us, then we must—quite simply—be watchful and sober (so 1 Thess. 5.6 and 5.19 quite close together). If it is said in the midst of the revelation of the conduct of Antichrist, " Here is (necessary) the patience and the faith of the saints " (Rev. 13.10), it is anything but a sceptical " Laissez faire, laissez passer! ": it is rather a statement and a warning for the man who knows of the fact that God sits on the throne and does all things well because He long ago made the decision and will bring it to completion. That is why the accounts of the mighty deeds of God under the Old and New Covenants cannot be read, proclaimed, preached and pondered often enough.

The message at the heart of the New Testament as embodied in the event of Christ is " Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand " (preaching of John the Baptist, Matt. 3.2, *and* of Jesus Christ, Matt. 4.17). It does not mean, " Repent, in order that the Kingdom of Heaven may come near ". It means rather, " Repent, because the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand ". We cannot make it clear enough to ourselves that God's Kingdom, God's Dominion, breaks through even without us. The process to which the Bible witnesses is as plain and simple as that. The one and only question put to us men is whether we take part or not. Precisely that is then the highest and most urgent appeal to us, which must leave us no peace and which can only bring to our lips the prayer: Thy Kingdom, Thy Dominion, come, come soon, come in power. The valid content of the proclamation of the Church to the Congregation, directed *on* itself, established *in* itself, carried out *from* itself, is nothing other than the mighty works of God.

What is the meaning of proclaim, preach, publish abroad

the Gospel as the Good News? The Swabian Prelate, Friedrich Christoph Oetinger, wrote a dictionary article against the "Aufklärung" theology and philosophy of his time. It may not indeed be methodically worked out, but it is challenging in its appositeness. The writer rightly introduces it thus: "Preaching—glorious, sublime truths which transcend ourselves must be presented."

THE OFFICE OF CHRIST IN PREDESTINATION

by The Rev. J. K. S. REID, B.D.

(*Concluded from previous issue of the Journal*)

5. Lutheranism and German Protestantism[1]

The difference in spirit between Calvinism and Lutheranism is illustrated by Melanchthon's famous phrase: *hoc est Christum cognoscere, beneficia eius cognoscere.* There are of course evident dangers in the wholesale application of the principle, and later Lutheranism did not successfully avoid them. The religious egotism to which it gave rise was certainly too anthropocentric to convey an unobjectionable view of the relation between God and man. It is not by chance, as Brunner (*Mediator* p. 408) points out, that Ritschl is found repeatedly appealing to the principle in defence of a point of view which really regards God as the " guarantee of the value of human life ".

Yet if there is any place where the principle can exert a salutary influence upon theological thought, it is in the doctrine of Predestination. Calvin avoided the pernicious consequences of the principle in virtue of his consistent emphasis on the sovereignty of God. But it would be difficult to defend Calvinism against the charge of scholasticism as it worked out the doctrine of Predestination in obedience to this emphasis, without the corrective influence of Melanchthon's principle. It can hardly be disputed that at this point faith begins to breathe more freely as it turns from the austere and highly rarefied atmosphere of Calvinism to the more robust air of Lutheranism.

(i) Heppe is incontestably right in his judgment that the principle of Protestantism was to " vindicate for the believer the certainty of the possessor of salvation in the promise and reality of God ". And this, which, as was earlier seen, was one interest in Calvinism, is the governing consideration in Lutheranism. Lutheranism's concern is not, as might be said of Calvinism, to unfold the secrets of the eternal majesty and

[1] Most of the references made in this section are to be found in Heppe's *Dogmatik des deutschen Protestantismus, Band* 2, 1857.

providence of God, but more simply to assure the believing heart of the certainty of its salvation. Melanchthon in the *Confessio Saxonica* says: " Nor do we add here questions about Predestination or about election, but escort all readers to the Word of God, and demand that they learn the will of God from His word itself, as the eternal Father has Himself bidden us: Hear Him. Nor do we seek after other speculations." This *tröstliche Bedeutung* of the doctrine of Predestination is attested by Luther repeatedly. Thus (Walch VIII, 2404): " I know for certain, and am entirely convinced, that I am in grace and pleasing to God, that I have the Holy Ghost, not by reason of my worthiness and virtues, but for Christ's sake, who for our sakes overcame the law and bore the sins of the world; in whom I believe."

Thus too, in what Heppe characterises as the second period of Lutheranism, in the case of Hemming (Heppe p. 26 f): " The eternal Predestination of God is the foundation and first cause of all benefits which we obtain from God. . . On it rests the certainty of salvation, so far as it extends to individual men."

Not unconnected with Lutheranism's strong emphasis upon Predestination as offering a genuine *certitudo salutis*, is the fact that German Reformed theology at first accorded the doctrine of the *perseverantia sanctorum* the place Lutheranism gave to the doctrine of Predestination. The process whereby this doctrine was elevated into a thoroughgoing doctrine of absolute Predestination was later and gradual (ib. 43 f).

(ii) True to the strongly practical concern which motivates it, the Lutheran doctrine is characterised by an absence of the fateful doctrine of *praedestinatio duplex*. Thus Heppe quotes Luther as saying (Walch X. 2001): " Human reason invents an unequal will of God, as though God were a tyrant, who had certain companions whose persons pleased him, whether they were good or bad; and on the other hand hated the others, let them do what they will. We are not to think of the will of God thus."

Thus too Melancthon (*Loci communes, de praedest.*): " We are therefore to seek the promise in which God expresses His will, and to know that there is no other will according to grace outside the word, but that God's command is immutable, that we should hear the Son, as He says: *Hunc audite*. This voice

comprehends all the promises. Let it therefore be fixed in our minds, and let us think in daily recollection, that the command of God is eternal and immutable, that we may believe the promise of grace, which is the sum of the Gospel . . . For this is the proper and particular voice of the gospel. For as the preaching of penitence is universal, and challenges all, so also the promise of grace is universal." The intimate connexion this doctrine has in the Lutheran mind with the concern for *certitudo salutis* comes again to light (*Conf. Aug.* p. 352): "As the preaching of penitence is universal, so the promise of grace is universal, and bids all believe and receive the benefit of Christ. This belief offers firm consolation to terrified (*perterrefactis*) minds; and contains nothing absurd, nothing perplexing, nothing sophistical. For this is not a matter requiring disputation concerning Predestination or the like, for the promise is universal." Melanchthon's disinclination to permit the possibility of a duplicity in the doctrine of Predestination is evident in his influence on the *Conf. Aug.*, where (Art. 5) it deals with the Office of Preaching, including the Means of Grace: Gospel and Sacrament. Here the earlier edition spoke of the provision of the word and the sacraments " through and by means of which God gives the Holy Spirit, who effects faith, where and when God will ". The last words were omitted in the 1540 edition of the Confession, and thus was closed a door that manifestly opened out readily into a double-edged doctrine.

To question the universality of the promise is to throw suspicion on the trustworthiness of God. Heppe quotes as follows (13): " Since the promise is universal, to enquire into election is to call the promise in question; and this is really to abrogate the Gospel and to accuse God of falsehood. Of so great evil is this curiosity productive: *scrutatur Deum sine verbo*." Melanchthon does not therefore become entangled in the web of subtle refinements in which Calvinism becomes involved, as within the " promise " it distinguishes call from election and tries to delimit their respective spheres. This is, in fact, to say more than the Word itself says to us, and is therefore illegitimate.

When the distinction between elect and rejected makes its appearance, Melanchthon is unwilling to run it back into the

will of God itself. Here is what he says (*Comm. ad Jn.* 12): "In (God's) will, the cause of election is the pity and merit of Christ; but it is proper that our apprehension should concur. For since the promise of grace is universal, as is most evident, and since it is necessary for us to obey the promise, some distinction between elected and rejected is to be accepted by our will, namely those repudiating the promise to be rejected, but on the other hand those embracing it to be accepted. We should feel ourselves in a true conflict, because it is neither possible nor right to judge concerning the will of God, except on the ground of the revealed promise."

It is not, then, surprising that Lutherans allowed expressions to escape them from time to time, which are semi-Pelagian and Arminian in character. So Hunnius says (quoted *Stafford Book* p. 64): "*res praescita, nempe fides in Christum, est causa electionis*". And elsewhere, the same document (p. 585) says bluntly: "that God does not bring some to repentance happens for reasons which God sees in the heart of men, but which we cannot see." The way out of this semi-Pelagian *impasse* is found by Lutheranism, not as with Calvinism, in the ruthless pursuit of *praedestinatio duplex* into the counsel and purpose of a sovereign God, but in an almost surprising *tertium quid*, which we shall consider in a moment, the means of grace committed to the Church.

(iii) Two practical considerations seem to have been constantly at work in Lutheranism. How much they contributed to the foundation of the Lutheran structure, and how far they constituted merely the defence works of the structure, it is difficult to say and unnecessary to determine.

Calvinism was regarded as being unpractical, inasmuch as it weakened the feeling of the duty of believing in one's own election. Lutherans saw in Calvinism the grave danger that election, so securely grounded in the immutable counsel of a sovereign God, would stifle in the elect the impulse to conduct themselves as elect, and that on the other side those who made no pretensions to election might be confirmed in their unregenerate ways. Thus Melanchthon (*Conf. Aug.* p. 352) sees not only in his view of Predestination a *consolationem perterrefactis mentibus*, but in the universality of the promise the further advantage that it "detracts nothing from works, but rather

excites to faith and good works". He further writes to Brenz (*Corp. Ref.* II, p. 547) of his own practical interest in the encouragement of works appropriate to election. Thus: "You subtly infer from Predestination that each has his level appointed to him, and you argue correctly. In my *Apologia* I have always avoided that long and inexplicable disputation concerning Predestination. I always speak as if Predestination followed our faith and works. And I do this with fixed intention, for I do not wish consciences to be troubled with those inexplicable labyrinths." His exposition is governed by a certain strong ethical and practical interest.

In point of fact, history proved the nervousness of Lutheranism about the ethical consequences of Calvinism to be almost entirely unfounded. Calvinist Predestination appeared to exclude freedom, but it proved historically to be the constant inspiration of free personality and the creator of free political and social institutions. So also, while appearing to offer the best of pretexts for moral laxity and indiscipline, Calvinism, as is well known and has been often remarked, in fact encouraged a profound moral earnestness. (Cf. J. A. Froude's famous judgment: the Calvinists "attracted to themselves every man in Europe that 'hated a lie' . . . They abhorred, as no body of men ever more abhorred, all conscious mendacity, all impurity, all moral wrong of every kind so far as they could recognise it. Whatever exists at this moment in England and Scotland of conscientious fear of wrong doing is the remnant of the convictions which were branded by the Calvinists into the people's hearts." Cf. also James Hogg's fascinating study of the consequences which Lutheranism feared in *Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner*, recently re-issued in a new edition. But of course this is recognisably a caricature of the facts, while at the same time a reasonable deduction from the theory.)

The other practical consideration never far from the Lutheran mind was the part which the Church had to play in the strategy of Predestination, the "divinely ordained significance and efficacy of the ecclesiastical means of grace" (Heppe p. 37). Heppe goes so far as to compare the Calvinist distinction between elect and not elect with that in Lutheranism between baptised and not baptised (p. 39). "In Word and

Sacrament, objectively, always and for everyone, saving power is certainly present" (Schweitzer: *Centraldogmen* I, p. 577). This represents a very marked break with the Augustinian form of the doctrine, and from the Reformed side much criticism was directed against it. Calvinists objected that this emphasis on ecclesiastical *vocatio*, *absolutio*, and so on, was wrong. Melanchthon, Bucer and Calvin were here at one, in seeing this as a "removal of salvation out of the hand of God Himself, and out of the immediate personal relation of God with men, into a false objectivity; a transformation of what is essentially inward into something outward, an objectification of the Kingdom of God in the interest of a false glorification of outward ecclesiasticism, a burdening of the glory of God and the freedom of the Christian man, a darkening of the glory of faith, and an undermining of the certainty of the consciousness of salvation" (Heppe p. 47). Means of grace and visible Church become sharply opposed to choosing by grace and invisible determination of God (*Gnadenmittel* and *Gnadenwahl*).

It is curious that the charge of undermining the *certitudo salutis* should have been levelled at this point against Lutheranism, and it only goes to show the divergent interests that were at stake in the doctrine of Predestination. Lutheranism, setting out with a desire to vindicate the assurance of the believer in his election, sees him as already member of the visible Church, and naturally commends the means of grace to him as pledge and seal of an assurance which he already possesses in germ. Calvin to whom the glorification of the sovereignty of God was a main concern, quite as naturally saw in the objective efficacy of the means of grace in this form an injury to the sovereignty of God; and since for him all the believer's assurance rested in a confident trust in this sovereignty, he found that his *certitudo* was also endangered. Only when it was put beyond the reach of both assistance and injury by any human or ecclesiastical action, and shut up from all temporal causality within the eternal counsel of God, did assurance seem to Calvin to have been adequately secured.

It was too in emphasis on the efficacy of the ecclesiastical means of grace that Lutherans took refuge from the charges of Synergism brought against them by the Reformed theology. A lively practical interest impelled them to certain unguarded

statements such as have already been quoted, which are certainly semi-Pelagian. Their concern that election should *lead* to good works sometimes tempts them to suggest that it *depends* on good works. On the other hand, as even Calvinism does, they find some kind of ground for reprobation or at least for the consequences of reprobation, i.e. damnation, within sinful man himself. The refuge Lutheranism found was in fact one which could hardly allay the suspicions of Calvinists. They found it, for what it was worth, in the means of grace proffered by the Church. Thus Hunnius (*Articulus de lib. arb. s. humani arb. viribus*, p. 68): "The absence of conversion is to be explained neither by synergism, as though one would not believe though he could, nor by the absolute decree, but, according to Scripture, by a *tertium quid*, the contempt of the appointment of the Church (*Ordnung*) and of the means of grace." It thus appears that the godless is reprobate because he is unwilling to make use of Word and sacrament and sets himself outside the efficacy of both.

(iv) What is to be said, then, about the office of Christ in Predestination, according to the Lutheran and German Protestant tradition? It is clear that, in this less systematic exposition and warmer atmosphere, Christ undertakes a more extensive work in Predestination than is explicitly allowed Him in Calvinism. Thus *Conf. Helv. II*, *art.* 10 says: "Not without means, but certainly not on account of any merit of ours, but *in Christo* and *propter Christum* has God elected us, so that those who now are engrafted in Christ through faith are elect, and those outside Christ are reprobate."

It is in Hyperius that clearest expression is given to the office of Christ in Predestination. This is the more remarkable, in that, while himself rather to be placed with the German Reformed theology, he breaks decisively with Calvin at this point. Thus *Meth. theol.* p. 193: "God has chosen us through Jesus Christ in Himself. We say once for all: if any cause moving God to our election can be seen, there is none to be found more apt than the dignity of the Son Himself." The *causa movens* of the eternal determination of God, Calvin found to be the interest of the self-glorification of God; and thus for Calvin Christ becomes in the last resort only a *causa instrumentalis*, an organ through which God realises His eternal

determination. For Hyperius, Christ stands as the *causa movens*, and upon Him *electio* rests. " To proceed further and to wish to investigate the causes of the divine will in this business is plainly temerity and an offence of *laesae maiestatis divinae*." Because Christ has in his system this place, it is possible for Hyperius to abandon the " indifference " in which Calvin really conceives God to rest: " God is by nature compassionate, and prefers to save rather than to condemn." For him, Christ is the *causa meritoria et movens propter quam*, the *causa efficiens et princeps*, of our salvation. " *Christum non instrumentalem modo esse salutis nostrae causam, verum etiam efficiendam et principem* " (*Varia opuscula theol.*, p. 641). " *Nec minus ad salutem nostram procurandam effecisse Christum quam ipsum Patrem.*" Hyperius objects to the view of others that " we are received into grace by God, not in virtue of Christ, but in virtue of the goodness and pity of God, in virtue of the excellent love with which He follows us. And of this divine love towards us Christ exists as sign, testimony and σφραγίδα." Against this Hyperius affirms that " Christ is in entirely the same way and with equal reason the efficient cause of our salvation as is God the Father the efficient cause, *nec minus ad salutem nostram procurandam effecisse Christum quam ipsum Patrem* ". The last cause of our salvation is, not as according to Calvin *arcanum consilium* and the *decretum absolutum*, but the divine will to salvation, guaranteed to us by the fact that Christ is in the business of salvation at the Father's side.

6. Prolegomena to Restatement

(i) The first necessity is to abandon once and for all the disastrous conception which finds expression in Calvin's words: " *gratiam praecedit electio* ". This is to be done by ushering Christ in to occupy that place beside the Father which is rightly His, and by permitting Him to exercise an office in the preparation of the " decree of election " as well as in its application. Whether then we shall be able to speak of " decree " without qualification remains to be seen. If Christ really is the revelation of God, then God is a God of grace, a God, that is, who in all His ways and works is gracious. This thought must be pressed to almost all limits. It is true that the *Deus revelatus* is still and for ever remains the *Deus absconditus*

(Is. 45.15). His very revelation is itself also a concealment. Who would think to find the sovereign God at work in a Nazareth carpenter's shop? But that God remains "hidden" must not be construed to mean that there is something or some part in God to which Christ is not the clue.

There is, then, nothing in God which is not gracious. God's *consilium* is not exempt from this principle. It is not a counsel which is carried out in or by grace; it is a counsel that is itself gracious. Nor is there in God any will which is superior or anterior to grace. God's will is a gracious will. God's will is not put into execution by grace, but is itself grace. (Cf. the very curious conception which appears in Cardinal Newman's hymn (*Church Hymnary* 32, verse 4), which Principal D. S. Cairns used to point out:

> And that a higher gift than grace
> Should flesh and blood refine,
> God's presence, and His very self
> And essence all-divine.

Do we rightly suspect here the cloven hoof of a doctrine of grace as a *substantia infusa*? At all events, while Calvin allows election some kind of precedence over grace, Newman accords a similar precedence to Christ. This is, of course, nonsense.)

If there is nothing which God wills that is not gracious, then Predestination is the work of grace. Indeed the whole conception is admirably fitted to convey the importance that precisely grace has at this point. Predestination is *sola gratia*. It is the eternal determination of God's will towards men, in total disregard of any considerations but those of grace. It is the complete vindication of God's work, which is done "without respect of persons" (1 Pet. 1.17). It is the denial that God is influenced by any merit in us or by any foreknowledge of such merit. This, as has been said, is a primary concern of Calvin. But he took an unfortunate method of promoting it. The defence he offers against the penetration of any meritorious considerations is the *arcanum consilium Dei*, and all protests are stifled in true Augustinian fashion by the "O homo, tu quis es?" of Rom. 9.20. And Predestination *sola gratia*, which is the true defence for which Calvin seeks, is allowed to relapse and degenerate into the Predestination *sine gratia* or at least *ante gratiam*. In fact, there is no real distinction between Pre-

destination and grace. While the connotation of the words differs, the denotation is identical. Predestination is simply grace traced, if we may so put it, to its earliest source, and found to be already deposited safely within an eternal decision. Predestination connotes that the grounds for a man's being right with God are at the last to be found with God and *in se uno*, where the door is barred to all extraneous intruders. Grace connotes that these *divinae sapientiae adyta* contain nothing which the light of revelation has not illumined, and that in them we shall never have the surprise of meeting what is un-Christlike.

(ii) When Christ is allotted His rightful place within the very grounds in which Predestination takes its rise, the possibility opens out for a genuine critique of the " decree " as such. If grace is in Christ enthroned at the very source of the matter, we must break with the idea of Predestination as a *res acta*, and affirm that it is rather a *res agenda*. Predestination is nothing but the gracious action of God's will, and not any abstraction therefrom. Barth is right in pointing out here that the conception of " decree " has had fateful consequences upon the doctrine, chiefly unhappy, since the inherent risk of misunderstanding was not avoided. Who does not think, asks Barth (*K. Dogmatik*, II.2, p. 198 f.), that by " decree " is meant " some kind of military or political ordinance, a law, a statute or regulation, which sets down, preserves and expresses in black and white the will of some ruler in a definitive form? " While a bill is before the Houses of Parliament, there is a certain lively activity (more or less) concerning it; but once it has reached the statute book, then the dead hand of finality has come down upon it. So too, however lively the proceedings may have been at the meeting of a committee or court, the decisions eventually are recorded as minutes. By the statutes and minutes, the bodies which have been responsible for decisions are bound and tied. And though of course in the last resort a statute can be repealed, and the decision petrified in a minute be revoked by reopening the discussion, short of this they are binding. To crystallise the gracious will of God into a " decree " is to take the dangerous step of " minuting " what is supremely activity: crystallisation under certain conditions becomes petrifaction. All the perils of

Deism make their appearance at a point where they can do grave injury, and where they can be least advantageously resisted. Having come to a definitive determination in the matter, God withdraws Himself into inactivity.

The " decree ", which almost inevitably is understood in a sense that fetters or hampers God, becomes for man a fate towards which he moves ineluctably. To set up Christ upon the level where the grounds of Predestination are, is to destroy this conception beyond repair. Ideas appropriate to fate are no more applicable to God's gracious Predestination and us who are its objects than they are to the one who in the presence of Christ cried out: " What have we to do with thee, Jesus of Nazareth? " or the others who in the same presence simply closed with the invitation of " Follow me ".

It becomes further clear that the guarantee of *solida fiducia* of election is not to be provided by a decree only. This security Calvin tended to find in the decree, as though it were a formally written document, unalterable and irrevocable. One is tempted to make use of the analogy of the Court Martial, where the sentence passed is withheld from public knowledge at the end of the trial, and its promulgation only made when certain factors, usually operating in the direction of clemency, have been permitted to exert their influence. The relief which promulgation brings to anyone accused of any grave offence is considerable. So Calvin found the *certitudo electionis* in a similar promulgation of the divine counsel in the decree. The allurement of such a proposed grounding of the confidence of the elect is of course evident. And yet confidence is wrongly so grounded. There is no sufficient ground outside the gracious will of God Himself, which is perpetually gracious towards His children. In this, as in so much else, when Christ is permitted the place which is His due, there is a heightened sense of responsibility on man's part, together with an appreciation in value of the prize to be attained. This will be seen in fact, to be a constant feature of the transition from the semi-deterministic and impersonal terms of the classic doctrine of Predestination to the highly responsible and personal terms of its restatement.

Further, when Christ is restored to the place He properly occupies in Predestination, it becomes possible to affirm with

greater consistency and emphasis that it is really God's *will* with which we are here concerned, and a will which as such has direction. The classic doctrine of Predestination, as Barth points out (*K. Dog.* II.2, p. 187), transmitted an unfortunate impression that God is equally well disposed to election and reprobation, and that He, in perfect equilibrium between the two, indifferently consigns some certain individuals to the right hand and salvation, and others to the left hand and damnation. The Reformers are always having difficulty with such Scriptural passages as Ezek. 18.23 and 2 Pet. 3.9: " Have I any pleasure that the wicked should die? saith the Lord God: and not that he should return from his ways, and live? "; " not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance ". And their difficulty is that the will of God has, so to say, been petrified in the decree. It is not so much God's will that now goes forth, as a fiat, the product of His will. The truth is that God's living will operates graciously, and, if so, then in the direction of salvation, and away from damnation. In a really living will, there can be no neutrality between the two.

(iii) The withdrawal of the unhappy petrifying influence which the conception of decree exerted in Predestination, liberates the will of God, as has just been said. It is then possible to maintain with a seriousness, insistence and consistency denied to the classic doctrine, that the will of God in Predestination is wholly personal. God is One " with whom we have to do ", and our dealings with Him are personal.

It must, I believe, be conceded that the Reformers did not succeed in keeping their doctrine free from a predominantly deterministic accent. Their excuse may well be found in the fact that it is only with a later age of science and machine that the full perils of determinism could have been clearly seen. But the statement of their doctrine read now contains, as Barth says, a " *verhängnisvoller eiserner Klang* ". Yet all the safeguards against such a perversion of the Scriptural doctrine were already in their hands. Right in the middle of the *locus classicus* in Rom. (ch. 9), where mechanical and deterministic conceptions are thought to have their fateful origin, there is at least one phrase which dissipates the threat, and restores the true personality of the relations in which, Holy Scripture holds, man

is bound to God in Predestination. Thus (verse 13): "As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." The expressions of love and hate at this point, with their objects actually named, absolve St. Paul, were there nothing else to do it, from the charge of determinism.

But it is of course in treating seriously of the fact that Predestination is *in Christo* that the full and final safeguard lies. Christ is, after all, the Word of God, and election is termed also " calling ". However technical these terms came to be, their initial connotation places them among the relations that are personal. God's coming to us, and His election of us, is through the Word. The whole mechanical causal nexus is thus abrogated and superseded. As theology has been learning from Kierkegaard and Buber, in the sphere of personal relationships the causal sequence has no relevance. The Word does not bear down upon us as an external and perhaps irresistible force. And since Predestination is *in Christo*, it has to do not with units but with personal souls. " Its aim ", says Camfield (*Revelation and the Holy Spirit*, p. 92 f.), " is not to collect a number of units but to act by way of choice and rejection on persons. That is to say, it is in the very field of our personal reactions, personal choices and decisions that Predestination works." And again (p. 95): " Predestination transcends the time element and brings the believer and Christ really together." God's action in Predestination is neither purely transcendent, as Deism would have us believe, nor wholly immanent, as the Roman doctrine of *gratia infusa* suggests, but personal. In His Word, He bears upon us in a manner that calls for decision. The only necessity in the case is the necessity for decision, i.e. that we become our own necessity.

(iv) The obverse of the fact that God wills to do with us, is that we have to do with Him. The correlative of Word is response, of calling is reply, of Cross is decision. Brunner has made us familiar with the theological importance of the idea of responsibility. He goes so far as to say (cf. a lecture given in Edinburgh in the summer of 1947) that the essence of man lies in his responsibility to God, and seems thus to commit himself to the belief that the essence of man consists in a relation and in nothing substantial at all. It has not yet appeared whether this doctrine can be sustained. But in the more limited

sphere of the enquiry here made, the idea of responsibility has the most profound significance.

As they stand before Christ, men are at a crossroads. From thence they go one way or they go the other. The Word is not a word spoken into the wind, but a Word that demands decision. Confronted by the Cross, we are impelled to decision. There is a "cruciality" in the Cross. Yet all the time, it is known that the impelling force is no mechanistic compulsion, but one which deals with us as persons. When we encounter God here, or rather when God encounters us, we are raised to the personal level. The Word demands reply.

When the reply is given, however, it is found to be one coming not out of our own resources alone. It is rather the echo of the reply already given in Christ. This confrontation with or by God to which we are in Christ exposed is both critical and creative (cf. Camfield, p. 93). It bears down upon us, rejecting in criticism the actual state of our relation to God, but only that it may choose us creatively for that relation to which by God's gracious will we are predestined. P. T. Forsyth (quoted, ib.) has made us familiar with the thought that ordinary experience affords examples of the evocation in us of really new responses by things which themselves create the responses. Thus a great poem does not merely submit itself to us passively for approval or disapproval, but itself criticises the understanding which fails to appreciate, and creatively enables it to do so. One may perhaps use this as an illustration without committing himself unconditionally to the accuracy of the view of creative powers here implied. Christ in some such way evokes from us the response which is at once His creation and yet our own reply. And it is a response which He Himself has already given.

7. The Office of Christ in Predestination

We finally address ourselves to the question of the office of Christ in Predestination, and attempt some kind of reply to it.

The start is made with Eph. 1.4: we are chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. Both aspects are to be equally emphasised: we are chosen in Christ; and we are chosen before the foundation of the world. This equal emphasis is the best defence against the temptation, against

which the Reformers were not wholly proof, of allotting to Christ a function merely instrumental in character. Christ does not merely convey and apply to men the eternal decision of the sovereign God. Christ is really with the sovereign God " before the foundation of the world ". His hand is at work in the preparation of the decree to which our Predestination is traceable. This point has already perhaps been made sufficiently clear.

If Christ is thus *der Erwählende*, He is also *der Erwählte*. He is not alone the Chooser, but the Chosen. Above all, He is the Chosen. " This is my beloved Son " (Matt. 17.5). It is hardly necessary to remark that this is said in no Adoptionist sense. It is not the Incarnate Son that is chosen, but the Eternal Son. He is already the object of the love of the Father within the economy of the Trinity. (It is perhaps worth while noting the double meaning of the Latin *dilectio*, both choice and love; and also the connection which the word has with *electio*. Cf. St. Thomas: *Summa Th.* 1.23.4, where the argument partly turns upon this close and not at all adventitious relation.)

As Himself the Chosen, Christ is able to impart to those committed to Him and incorporated in Him the divine election. He is the Head; those united to Him in the response of faith are His members, and the Head enjoys nothing which is not communicable to the members. He bears salvation in His hands for transmission to those who in faith close with Him. Thus our Predestination is in Christ not only *in consilio* but also *in executione et effectu*. God's choice of Him extends to them who are in Him. If we will have a distinction of terms to differentiate the office of Christ the Chooser from the office of Christ the Chosen, we might say that Predestination is from the one angle *in Christo*, and from the other *per Christum*. But we must affirm both.

So far concerning election. What may be said of Christ's office in reprobation? We have here to take very seriously the cry of dereliction (Matt. 27.46): " My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? " Christ is not only the Chosen; He is also the Reprobate, not indeed for His own sake but for ours. While He as the Chosen bears in His hands salvation for transmission to us, so too as the Reprobate He bears upon His

shoulders a damnation that it may *not* be transmitted to us. That is to say, our election is not only *in Christo* and *per Christum*, but also *propter Christum*.

The classic doctrine of Predestination set up a certain parallelism between election and reprobation, between salvation and damnation, carried it so far, and allowed it to falter and fail. The Reformers found in God the whole ground of both election and salvation. They found in God also the whole ground of reprobation; but the ground of the consequence of reprobation, namely damnation, they found in the sinner himself. They therefore find themselves free at this point to make use of the ideas of merit, desert and punishment, which ill consort with the main tendency of their thought.

In fact, the Reformers were quite right in not pressing the parallelism too far. But they let it falter and fail at the wrong point. When Predestination is seriously taken to be in Christ, the point at which the parallelism must be abandoned lies elsewhere. Christ as the Chosen bears salvation in His hands for impartation to those who are in Him. But Christ as reprobate bears damnation on His shoulders to defend and shelter those who are in Him from it, however merited.

It is significant that the point at which the classic doctrine permits of this deviation from parallelism is found to be in man, namely in his sin. The reason for this is evident. As we saw, under the influence of the idea of decree, God's will stiffens into a rigidity which holds it in equilibrium between election and reprobation, and favour is shown to neither. Once the office of Christ is seen to operate in the preparation of the decree, this false equilibrium is disturbed. God's will becomes alive and manifests in grace a certain direction, or, as we may say, preference. He wills " not that any man should perish ". Hence it becomes possible and even necessary to lodge the deviation from parallelism between election and reprobation in God Himself. The salvation is Christ's so that we may partake, but the damnation so that we may escape. Christ is the Chosen; therefore we are chosen. And Christ is the Reprobate; therefore we are not reprobate.

The way of freedom is thus opened up for men. Christ is the " Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world ". He is the scapegoat bearing our sins hence into the wilderness

(Lev. 16.8-10). The servitude of man's will is thus broken, in that the sovereign power to which it was in servitude is broken. The *servum arbitrium* becomes the *liberum arbitrium.* Christ's reprobation is the annulment of the kingdom of sin in which men were slaves. The possibility of response to God's Word in Christ now opens out before them. They become in Brunner's sense responsible, and thus truly men. They give the right response through the creative influence of the Word. They are in Christ's election elect, and in His reprobation freed from reprobation. They thus by their own decision enter into that sonship of God which was predetermined for them.

Predestination is, then, God's gracious election. It is true that in Christ we each are both elect and reprobate. But just because God's will does not stand in suspended equilibrium between the two, but favours one in preference to the other, He has provided Christ to fulfil and so annul our reprobation, and to win from us the response to our election which He eternally determined. All therefore are predetermined to election.

Are we, then, committed to a doctrine of universalism? Before answering this question, something else requires to be said. That in the last resort it will always be open to men to reject what is offered in Christ is a wholly necessary affirmation. If this is not held, the whole matter of decision for Christ, though not of course the work of Christ itself, is reduced to the merest *Schattenspielerei*, and there are no eternal issues really at stake when a man is confronted by the Cross of Christ. Yet the difficulty of finding room for the reality of rejection is a very grave one. Those who close with Christ find that their affirmative response is the echo of the response already made on their behalf in Christ; and they assume the status of sonship determined for them in the eternal decision of God. Does the negative response find too that it is the echo of predestination? How can it?

In this acute dilemma, some relief is to be found in the rejection of the rigid classification of elect and reprobate with which the classic doctrine worked. The Reformers affirmed that, dependent upon election and reprobation, there were real classes of individuals, with actual members already assigned to them. When, however, the shackles which the

idea of decree imposes on the will of God are shaken off, and the will of God is restored to that living activity in which it consists, it becomes clear that there are in fact no such classes at all. There are only existential possibilities. This is implied by the personal relationship established in Christ between men and God.

If it be alleged that this is to set up a species of indeterminism at the heart of Predestination, I am not sure that the charge can be entirely rebutted, and this must be confessed to be a singularly lame conclusion. But it is rather important to realise that what confronts us here is not the sudden reef which exposes the weakness of a theory, and on which it must suffer shipwreck. It is rather a portion of that reef with which all theories must reckon, and which none can in final analysis really negotiate. I mean of course the reef of evil. It is not on the whole surprising to find that it is at this point no more negotiable than at any other. The Yes of the elect is found to be the echo of the Yes given already in Jesus Christ. The No of the reprobate cannot be similarly regarded as the echo of a No given already in Jesus Christ. This lack of equality in the status of Yes and No, while both are real, is no more surprising than the lack of equality in status between good and evil, though both maintain existence within God's world. If evil is the final irrationality, it is not surprising that we should find that man's final cleaving to evil rather than good resists exact comprehension.

No one will have the temerity to expect that all the difficulty inherent in the doctrine of Predestination can be obviated or ironed out. What does appear possible is to shift the pressure of the difficulty to a more tolerable point than in the Reformers' doctrine. They entertained a certain horror of leaving the end of any man undetermined, and were thus led to the impossible doctrine of *praedestinatio duplex*, with its implication that God creates some men for the very purpose of damnation; and they covered up the infamy of the doctrine by a respectable allusion to the glory of God's justice. It is on the whole better to invoke the Augustinian " O homo, tu quis es? " at a different and more bearable point, and to permit that certain indeterminism which leaves to men the possibility of finally rejecting Christ.

CONCERNING THE MINISTRY

by The Rev. Professor J. H. S. BURLEIGH,
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A critical review of the issues raised by *The Apostolic Ministry*, Essays on the History and the Doctrine of Episcopacy, prepared under the direction of Kenneth E. Kirk, Bishop of Oxford (Hodder and Stoughton, £2 2s.) and *The Ministry of the Church*, by Bishop Stephen Neill and others (The Canterbury Press, 2s.).

I

In his Foreword to an impressive volume, the Bishop of Oxford hails as the happiest ecclesiastical development of the last half-century the growing desire for unity among Christians. Nevertheless he finds himself profoundly disquieted when as in South India this desire leads to the formulation of plans for reunion which accept the institution of episcopacy but stipulate that no theory of it shall be obligatory. "The doctrine of the ministry is the crux of the whole matter, involving the continuous integrity of the Gospel of Christ throughout the ages." With this Presbyterians must have some sympathy. Dr. Kirk has oversimplified the problem and, so far as Presbyterianism is concerned, quite misunderstood it, when he continues: "Is the ministry 'from above' or 'from below'? Is it a gift to the Church from her Founder and Saviour, or an expedient evolved by the Church to meet the exigencies of her daily life? Has it a commission transmitted in orderly sequence from the Lord Himself, or is it commissioned simply and solely by the congregation of believers among whom the minister is to serve?" On this issue Presbyterians stand solidly with him, except in the interpretation of the words "transmitted in orderly sequence". To make matters of order enter into the substance of the faith is primitive Presbyterianism, as it was no feature of original Anglicanism. As Mrs. Jalland points out, "it arose in the second and third generation of Anglicans who had to reinforce their ramparts against the Presbyterian foe", a foe, she might have added, equipped with a *de fide* doctrine of the ministry *jure divino*. Presbyterians mostly have long abandoned, or grown oblivious to, their classical inheritance. For such of them as are beginning to try to understand it this collection of Essays by outstanding Anglo-Catholic scholars will be of inestimable value. Their position is clear and challenging, and their statement of it

offers so much common ground as to provoke fruitful debate rather than barren controversy. If Cartwright had had to do with such men instead of Whitgift or even Hooker, how different English and perhaps Scottish Ecclesiastical History might have been! The Presbyterian-Episcopalian controversy has had many phases. With this volume a new one seems to be emerging. " What is really in question in our present discussions about ' episcopacy ' is not the ' episcopate ' at all. It is the ' apostolate '." (p. 296). This is truly a great clarification, if only it could be kept steadily in mind.

Again and again it is insisted by the writers of these Essays that they have no interest to defend or to commend any particular episcopal system, least of all that which prevails in the Church of England. Several of the Essays are devoted to tracing the history of the episcopate through the ages with the express purpose of unmasking the diplomatic ambiguities which lurk in the phrase, " The Historic Episcopate ". The episcopate has indeed appeared under that identical name but in a multiplicity of forms in varied historical situations. " How could anyone bring under the heading of a single institution embodiments so diverse as the pre-Nicene bishop . . .; the hereditary patriarch of the Assyrian Church; the imperially-nominated Byzantine spiritual bureaucrat; the ordaining bishop of the Celtic Churches . . .; the prince-bishop of the Middle Ages . . .; the Tudor or Stuart functionary in episcopal orders whose principal *raison d'être* was to administer certain Acts of Parliament for the Uniformity of Religion? " (pp. 297-8). There is no claim made that the episcopate in any of its historical guises has been *de bene esse ecclesiae*. On the contrary there is the frank admission that it has sometimes been *de male esse*. Dr. Kirk goes so far as to say that on purely practical grounds apart from doctrine it might prove so useless to a church, united on the basis of a merely administrative episcopate, as to be discontinued.

Is there then, persisting through all the historical accidents to which the episcopate has been subject, some abiding essence, something the possession of which makes it to be *de esse ecclesiae*, " the Essential Ministry "? This is how the problem presents itself to Fr. Hebert. His answer (p. 500) is: " Its essential character must lie in a ministry of the word and sacraments, and a pastoral office. It must be a ministerial episcopacy." Nothing could be better. Here we have almost exactly Calvin's criterion for judging " distorted forms of the bishop's office ", and his conception of its true function. Fr. Hebert is also justified in pointing out that this large ideal may be upheld with varying emphases. The Protestant emphasis is on the living and creative Word of God, demanding " a doctrine of the ministry as the proper vehicle of the

divine mediation of life through the Word ". On the other hand the Catholic conception of the " sacramental mediation of the redemption and renewal of our human nature " involves an appropriate doctrine of the ministry in which the emphasis will fall on the administration of the sacraments.

Indubitably there are these divergent emphases, and they can lead to dangerously one-sided views: as e.g., when the Protestant ministry is conceived as a purely preaching ministry, or when the Catholic ministry is represented (as repeatedly in this book) as one which " makes Christians by confirmation and makes clergy by ordination ". One seems to notice a curious fondness on the part of some of the Essayists for the ancient Celtic bishop who only ordained, surely the *reductio ad absurdum* of ministerial episcopacy. Had Fr. Hebert taken his definition of the essence of episcopacy seriously he would have reached a doctrine of the ministry not unlike that which is held in the Reformed Churches. Such a doctrine seems logically to be demanded by Dom Gregory Dix's pictures of the pre-Nicene bishop who, on his showing, resembles the Presbyterian minister much more closely than the Anglican bishop. Moreover Bishop Mackenzie in acknowledging " Side-lights from Non-Episcopal Communions " comes nearer to a true understanding of Presbyterianism than do many of its more recent apologists. " The Presbyterian would never say that he did not believe in bishops. By his principles every minister is a bishop." He would welcome the disappearance of large dioceses with their consequence, " prelacy", " the real bugbear of the non-episcopalian". This would also, he urges, restore the bishop " to his true position as a pastor and a liturgical leader ".

From the Anglican point of view, indeed from any viewpoint which assumes Anglican episcopacy to be normal, it is natural to suppose that Calvin deliberately abolished the episcopate and its attendant orders, substituting a new Church Order of his own devising. With rare insight Dom Gregory Dix reminds us that the retention of the titles, bishop, presbyter and deacon, is no guarantee that the offices are identical with those so named in the Early Church. He bids us " cease to be hypnotised by words and to get down to realities ". This is precisely what Calvin attempted to do. His Church Order, with some disregard for names and words and titles, does in fact retain the ancient offices—pastor or bishop, elder or presbyter, and deacon—purged of the medieval " distortions " and abuses so brilliantly described in this book by Mr. Parker. Whatever use Calvin or his followers may have made of Jerome's assertion of the original parity of bishop and presbyter, it is in no sense fundamental or essential to Presbyterian theory.

We should be grateful to Dr. Jalland for his convincing explanation and exposure of that old canard. But it will not do to say with Dom Gregory Dix that Calvin reproduced with a fair degree of accuracy the institutions of the Jewish synagogue. He was conscientiously and deliberately reproducing the New Testament primitive model. Granted, historical knowledge was imperfect in the sixteenth century (it can never be complete). Granted, the modern historical sense must judge his enterprise to have been vain. Dom Gregory himself, however, makes it abundantly clear that Calvin was astonishingly successful in reconstructing the order of the Early Church. But in doing so did he not snap the magic chain that might have linked the Genevan ministry with the Apostles?

Here indeed emerges the fundamental problem, viz. the Apostolicity of the ministry, to which this book offers an intriguing solution. Its thesis briefly is that (*a*) the Apostolate was intended to be propagated by derivation or succession, and that (*b*) bishops of the Ignatian model were providentially prepared to become the channels into which the divinely appointed Apostolic power should flow, " a river which no dam could stop and no accident divert ! " The Lord commissioned the Apostles who in turn associated others with themselves, e.g., Matthias, Barnabas, Paul, Silas, so expanding the Apostolate. Later they delegated the Apostolate to men like Timothy and Titus. To these Dix would like to add Polycarp, Clement of Rome and possibly Ignatius, who came indeed to be styled " apostolic men " though they themselves sharply distinguished themselves from the Apostles. Thus the Apostolate may be seen localising itself at least in certain " apostolic churches ". Meantime there had arisen in the churches a ministry " from below ". Dix grants, what Farrer attempts to disprove, that there were originally two types of local presbyteries, one in which a college of equal presbyters exercised *episcope* collectively, the other hierarchically organised under a monarchical bishop. This latter type, evidenced in the epistles of Ignatius, rapidly prevailed over the former, and its bishop was the providentially provided receptacle for Apostolic power seeking a local habitation. " The exact stages in the taking over of the apostolic inheritance by the local leadership cannot be marked, but it was not completed until the local authority had been made suitable for it by concentration under one head, the Ignatian bishop " (p. 170). That this particular process had taken place and had reached completion towards the end of the second century is held to be " clear to demonstration " in the *Apostolic Tradition* of Hippolytus, a document of the third century but believed to reflect earlier conditions. It is interesting to observe how this recently discovered document has

restored a confidence rudely shaken when the *Didache* turned up a couple of generations ago. This time, it is true, we know the name, date and locus of the author and something of his standing. Nevertheless his work affords a somewhat precarious foundation for so ingenious an historical reconstruction.

It is impossible here to examine in detail this fascinating and exciting theory as it is worked out for the New Testament by Dr. Farrer, and for the Early Church by Dom Gregory Dix. But some points call for comment.

(1) Without doubt the author of Acts does endeavour to bring the Seven Men of Acts 6 under the authority of the Apostles, and does not call them deacons. But neither does he hint that they are Elders. To import the idea into his account from Numbers 11, with Stephen and Philip corresponding to Eldad and Medad, in the name of typology, is surely to infringe Dr. Farrer's own principles. " We must reject any presentation of our Lord's Biblicism which degrades His mental processes to a textual game." Should not this protect Luke's sober narrative from a similar degradation?

(2) I hold no brief for " Harnack's heresy " concerning the charismatic ministry; but Dr. Farrer has made things easy for himself by the unwarranted assumption that the New Testament prophets and teachers are simply " associates and instruments of the Apostles ". St. Paul clearly accords them an independent authority derived from the Spirit. It would be possible to read the history of the second century as the struggle of bishops with charismatics, Montanist prophets and Gnostic teachers, both sides claiming to stand in lines of succession reaching back to Apostolic times. As a powerful weapon for the fight the bishops served themselves heirs to the Apostles. The fact is we know well enough the stages in the development of the doctrine of Apostolic succession through Clement, Irenaeus, Hippolytus to Cyprian. We know also the situations which called for each step. If anything was evolved to meet the exigences of the Church's daily life that doctrine was. And the Irenaean version of it must, as Calvin pointed out, be held to have been invalidated in the fourth century when bishops in large numbers fell into heresy. " Nothing," says Calvin, " is more absurd than to disregard doctrine and place succession in persons." Curiously little attention is paid in this book to the doctrinal aspects of the question. Irenaeus and the Hippolytus of the *Refutation* are studiously side-tracked. Does Dom Gregory seriously mean to disparage " theological abstractions " (p. 211) in a volume designed to stress the doctrine rather than the institution of episcopacy?

(3) And what *are* we to make of the argument from the Jewish

institution of the *shaliach*, the plenipotentiary sent to act not only in the name but in the person of his principal, " giving rise to the rabbinic adage cited no less than nine times in the Talmud 'a man's shaliach is as it were himself' ". No doubt the Greek *apostolos* is the translation of *shaliach*. The idea of *shaliach* may well underlie the first Galilean " sending " of the disciples, though there is no hint of it in the final missionary command. Would the *shaliach's* authority survive the life of his principal? And is it not possible for a plenipotentiary to abuse his principal's trust? A rabbinic adage is hardly sufficient to prove our Lord's intention that the Apostolate should be perpetuated through the ages. Dr. Farrer knows that " the function of apostleship ceased in some degree ", " Bishops are apostolic perhaps, but not apostles ". " Perhaps " the degree of apostleship remaining was with time reduced to insignificance.

At any rate in the sixteenth century it attracted but little attention. In England bishops were retained because they proved useful to Tudor and Stuart policy. Generally the episcopal office seems to have sunk into insignificance after the conciliar period, becoming a counter in papal bargains with kings. It was the divine right of Pope or King that formed the main subject of debate, almost completely excluding interest in the claim of bishops to Apostolic power. It does not seem to have occurred to Calvin to ask whether anything of apostolicity was to be gained through the magic touch of Pierre de la Beaume, Prince-bishop of Geneva, and his confrères, or even what was the relation of the Reformed ministry to its medieval predecessor. The presbyterian-episcopal controversy simply had not yet arisen. But this is not to say that he was indifferent to the question of the apostolicity of the ministry. The Apostolic Age was a given historical epoch which had passed away. But it had bequeathed to the Church the Apostolic Scriptures containing the Gospel and the form of the ministry for the preaching of the Gospel, the administration of the sacraments, the edification and government of the Church. A ministry that remains faithful to the Word, apart from all romanticism, has all of apostolicity that matters, or indeed is possible. Dr. Farrer compares the divinely instituted apostolic power to " a river which no dam could stop and no accident divert ". But then he must immediately ask: " Where did it go? And where is it now? " If such questions are necessary, it may be suggested that after all the metaphor is misleading. Would it not be nearer the mark to compare apostolicity to a well of living water from which all may draw for refreshment and for the satisfying of the needs of the Christian life?

J. H. S. Burleigh

II

The Apostolic Ministry is a volume of outstanding importance, as Professor Burleigh points out in his review, not only because of its wealth of learning but because in many respects it represents a change of front on the part of Anglicans in the realisation that it is ultimately upon theological grounds that a true conception of the ministry must rest. At the same time it cannot but be of extreme interest to the Reformed Churches in that it approaches their view that the ministry is creative of the Church. Nevertheless the precise interpretation given to that doctrine in these pages throws out a real challenge to the Reformed Churches which must be taken seriously, particularly as it has been thrown out in view of the widespread movement for re-union. I have no hesitation, therefore, in adding to the excellent review above a further discussion particularly of the more theological issues raised.

At the very outset something must be said about the methods employed by the various scholars who contribute to this book. It is refreshing to find here the combination of biblical and historical research with dogmatic construction or reconstruction. That is a method of investigation which I, for one, welcome, as being a great advance even upon the impartial scholarly method of men like Lightfoot, Hort, and Swete, and I find myself in definite agreement with them against many of their predecessors in this field in their insistence that, apart from a doctrine of the ministry, no real progress can be made through the criss-cross tradition of Church history on this subject. Let it be recognised, however, that this is a method of investigation that can play only too easily into the hands of presuppositions and prejudices entertained by the scholars themselves. That alas is what happens too often in this volume, vitiating its conclusions. All learning is not scholarship. A great deal of the evidence that has been advanced in this book is " evidence " based only upon " evidence " already re-moulded by the presuppositions of the writers themselves and set forth as already proven. Against such wilfulness and inexactitude one must register a vehement protest. One welcomes the way in which Fr. Thornton and Dr. Farrer treat the Bible as a unity, which, thanks to the immense scholarship associated with the name of Kittel, and to the work of New Testament scholars like A. M. Hunter, we are beginning to realise afresh to-day, but the exegetical acrobatics of both Thornton and Farrer are not worthy of the name of true scholarship.

There is much also in the able essay of Dom Gregory Dix that one cannot let pass without calling its method in question. To one who

does not know his patristics very well the Dixian evidence appears convincing, but no one who has really studied carefully the fathers he cites can fail to be amazed at his temerity in picking out bits of evidence here and there, and his wilful overlooking of disturbing facts, and sheer neglect of other facts. That is nowhere more patent than in his handling of the *Didache* and even of 1 *Clement*, not to mention a great deal in Hippolytus that smites his views down to the ground again and again, but which apparently he dares not look in the face. But perhaps more important than all this, is the way in which he starts off with the schismatic Hippolytus, and " believes " that what he finds there is the key to the interpretation of the earlier less developed form of the ministry and later and more developed form of the ministry. This is to suppose that all this is a *legitimate* development of the New Testament doctrine and practice, and entails a quite uncritical handling of Church history. In the end it really means that all the Dixian evidence is based upon a mere inference which allows him to read into the New Testament notions and practices that are simply not there.

In rejecting the evidence of the *Didache*, Dix gives as his reason that it proceeds from a *milieu* so different from that in which Pauline evidence is found. He refuses therefore to interpret Pauline language from the angle of the *Didache*, but insists in interpreting the New Testament language from the angle of Hippolytus! It is not, however, from Hippolytus as a whole that he takes his cue so much as from certain liturgical selections from Hippolytus considered in almost entire abstraction from the theology of Hippolytus and his background in the Roman Schism. Incidentally, Dix seems to be ignorant of the work done by Cullmann in Strasbourg on the intimate relation between 1 *Clement* and Paul's *Epistle to the Philippians*, which has thrown a flood of light on the situation in Rome: a split between Jewish and Gentile Christians which had brought down upon both Peter and Paul the sentence of death. It is that situation which Clement holds up as a warning to the Corinthian Church who have in their midst a like schism. All the evidence goes to show that it is in the light of this Roman schism between Jewish and Gentile elements, complicated by the introduction of gnosticism, that the *milieu* of Hippolytus is to be understood, and further that it was precisely because Hippolytus was a schismatic that he laid deliberate claim to apostolicity. That puts an entirely different complexion upon the situation, and upon the material Dix uses. But Dix prefers to shut his eyes, apparently, to all the facts, and *believes*, as he says, that the evidence he gets out of Hippolytus originates from a period before Hippolytus became a schismatic. And so all the Dixian evidence rests upon

this blind inference! Had Dix taken the trouble to investigate the theology and particularly the christology of Hippolytus, he might have been forced to a different conclusion in spite of himself. It seems extraordinary, to say the least, that a scholar who professes to take such a firm stand with his colleagues on the principles of *Nicaea* and *Chalcedon* should take some of his leading ideas from one so heretical in his christology as Hippolytus.

The plain facts to anyone acquainted with this early patristic literature seem to be these: Particularly after 70 A.D., and until the Pauline corpus received general circulation, Judaistic and Gnostic trends of thought corroded the faith of the early Church. These elements embedded themselves in the stream of the Tradition, and were not dislodged even when St. Paul's Epistles were widely read. From people like Celsus and one of the two unknown writers of the composite *Epistle to Diognetus* one learns that there was a genuine understanding of the Pauline Gospel, but almost all the extant literature of the Post-Apostolic period bears witness to serious defection from the New Testament Gospel in these two ways. The struggle between these heretical elements and the Gospel became so intense that eventually at *Nicaea* and *Chalcedon* a handful of forceful Bishops pressed the Church to make up its mind in dogmas which ever since have generally been recognised as binding upon the whole Church. But the fact of supreme importance for the present question is this: that although the Church gave correct formulation to its doctrine of Christ, it did not proceed to carry out this christological correction in the form of the ministry and the shape of the liturgy. Both of these, as is most evident in Hippolytus, for example, are essentially grounded upon or mixed up with christological heresy, partly Ebionite on the one hand, and partly Docetic on the other hand. The astonishing fact that confronts us in this volume, therefore, is that Dom Gregory starts out in his views with a form of the ministry and a shape of the liturgy that are as yet uncorrected by the christology of *Chalcedon*, and tries to make them normative. This means that the major weakness of this volume is christological. Indeed it is christological heresy of the first magnitude.

In order to make that clear we shall have to deal with the king-pin of the whole thesis: the idea of *Shaliach*, for it is at this point that we have Judaistic heresy on the one hand (Ebionitism) and Mandaean, Gnostic heresy on the other hand (Docetism). At the root of these lies the perverse Dixian translation of the words: שְׁלוּחוֹ שֶׁל אָדָם כְּמוֹתוֹ (*Ber.* 5.5; for further examples see Strack-Billerbeck, 3.2). Dix persistently translates this as "A man's *shaliach* is as it were himself", though, with perhaps a twinge of

conscience, he adds, on the first occasion, in brackets, " like himself". The overwhelming evidence in Rengstorf's article (in Kittel's *Woerterbuch*) indicates that *shaliach* does not carry a religious or mystical relation of identity between a man and his *shaliach*. It is a purely legal relation or a legal representation—a clear example is given by Rengstorf in the instance of the man who uses a *shaliach* in order to become engaged to a girl by proxy. That is to say, the relation envisaged is a relation of proxy in function, not of personal identity. It is also pointed out, however, that *shaliach* may gain in certain associations (e.g., in Mandaean and Manichaean contexts) the sense of mystical relation. In Jewish Gnostic circles this was what sometimes happened, and there can be not a shred of a doubt that it was *shaliach* in that form (Judaeo-gnostic) that influenced the conception of the ministry in the third century, if not earlier. There are in fact traces of it already in Ignatius where such a relation is persistently interpreted in terms of gnostic ἕνωσις. Now that is precisely what the New Testament is concerned to avoid, and therefore, as Rengstorf points out, when in the Gospels the idea of *shaliach* appears to underlie the thought, they deliberately lay all the emphasis upon the verbs, ἀποστέλλειν and πέμπειν, and are shy about using the noun, ἀπόστολος, so that in the mission and commission of the Apostles the emphasis is on the function of the Disciples as eye-witnesses of the Resurrection empowered by the Spirit, and *not on the persons of the Apostles*. The whole New Testament doctrine of *shaliach* (if we are to use this word) is one in which the person of the *shaliach* retreats into the background, so that the living person of the risen Christ comes to the fore. A Diotrephic love of personal pre-eminence (cf. also Matt. 23.8-12) is the very thing the New Testament avoids, but which Dr. Kirk and his confederates try their hardest to resurrect and justify, an attempt in which they appear to succeed only by resorting to " evidence " from Judaisers and schismatics!

The application of the *shaliach*-relation to the New Testament throws light upon two things.

(1) In regard to the Apostles the idea of *shaliach* is used only in regard to their function as witnesses of the resurrection, and as the *locus* of the New Testament revelation. The Rabbis used to speak of several of the Old Testament prophets as *sheluchim*: Moses, Elijah, Elisha, and Ezekiel. They restricted the term to those prophets who not only spoke the Word of God, but were obviously authorised by certain miraculous deeds as bearers of that Word. *Shaliach* referred to the man who speaks for God and acts for God in σημεῖα. It is supremely in that sense that Christ is the Apostle:

He is the Word of God and the Act of God in an absolute sense. In Him the Word and Deed of God are identical, identical with His own Person. Christ was sent not only to forgive sins, but to heal, not only to speak of pardon in a parable, but to enact that pardon in our flesh and blood. It is supremely at the Cross that He is God's Word and Deed. That, as Paul says, is God's testimony, *logos* and *dynamis*. In the Synoptics this Christ sends out the disciples and the seventy to proclaim the Word of God, *and to heal*. He sends them out in a special mission in which their word is accompanied by *semeia*, therefore as *sheluchim*, though the Evangelists hesitated to use that expression. Later on when the word *apostle* came to be used, it was always in that sense. They were men who had been with Jesus, who were eye-witnesses of His resurrection, and whose witness and proclamation were accompanied by special evidences of *dynamis*. Hence St. Paul defends his position as an Apostle, by insisting that he too has the apostolic *semeia*. What this means we shall determine more precisely when we come to discuss *kerygma*. According to the evidence brought forward by Rengstorf, therefore, the disciples are to be thought of as sent out in their mission with this Hebrew idea of *sheluchim* in the background, in the sense that as they preached and exercised their function as bearers of the Word of God, the *semeia* bore evidence to the fact that it was God Himself who spoke their *kerygma*, and acted upon the hearers; at least upon those who had ears to hear. In this the *persons* of the Apostles retreated into the background, while in the foreground there was the living Word of God. All this was reinforced by the Resurrection, for in the recommission of the Apostles by the risen Christ, they were sent forth to do greater works, such that in their proclamation the word of men should become the very power of God creative of the Church.

(2) But this brings us to the other fact which we must note. In the New Testament it is supremely the Holy Ghost who is the *shaliach* of Christ, and here the legal relation (Advocate-paraclete) is caught up in the relation of identity between Christ and His other Self, the *Shaliach-Spirit*. Thus John records: "But the Paraclete whom the Father shall send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." "Be not afraid . . . I will come unto you", etc. In the strict sense it is only the Holy Spirit who is Christ's *Shaliach*—and even he is *Shaliach* in such a way that He does not draw attention to Himself or speak of His own Person, but speaks only of Christ. That is the inner meaning of the Apostolic Witness, and the Apostolic function is defined in terms of this *Holy Ghost-Shaliach*: "And ye also shall bear witness, because

ye have been with me from the beginning." The argument of John's Gospel is quite clear. Only the Holy Ghost is *Shaliach* in the sense of being the personal representative of Christ, and identical in person with Him. To call a Bishop a *shaliach* in this personal sense, to call him *Alter Christus*, is to quench the Holy Ghost, and really amounts to blasphemy. When you ask the *Fourth Gospel*: What then is the relation of the Apostles to Christ and His *Shaliach-Spirit*? it answers consistently by the thought of "abiding", an abiding through the Word. Thus between the announcement of the *Spirit-Shaliach* and the description of the relation of the Apostles as witnesses to Him, Christ discourses on abiding in His Word and Love. Of all this there is hardly a word in *The Apostolic Ministry*. The doctrine of the Holy Spirit is almost entirely neglected, except at incidental points. The *Holy Spirit-Shaliach* is dethroned, and in His place there is substituted a doctrine of *Bishop-Shaliach* who in very person and deposit, nay in personal identity, represents Christ Jesus. The Holy Ghost is treated as a mere *paradosis* which Bishops can pass on from hand to head. The index alone shows how little this huge book has to say about the Holy Spirit. That is only another indication of how christologically false the whole structure of its thesis is. In christology the relation between the Father and the Son is the Holy Ghost as *communio quaedam consubstantialis*, and the relation between the Lord and Jesus is also the Holy Ghost, and so on this christological pattern (which Fr. Hebert tries to follow) the relation between the Church and its ministry, and Christ Jesus, should also be the Holy Ghost—but no: there is substituted a quasi-psychological, mystical relation of identity called *shaliach* and interpreted in terms of gnostic Judaism.

What is the New Testament doctrine of the *Spirit-Shaliach* relation of Christ to the Apostle? This is contained in the doctrine of *kerygma*, so grievously misunderstood by every writer in this volume. *Kerygma* may be defined in modern terms as objective sacramental preaching with an eschatological result, such that the original event, Christ incarnate, crucified and risen, becomes event all over again in the faith of the hearer. It is supremely in the Apostolate created by Christ as the human end of the New Testament revelation that the original unrepeatable event of the Resurrection takes place as a human word empowered by the Holy Ghost. When the Apostles proclaimed Christ, through them acting as mere stewards or earthen vessels, or as ambassadors speaking in Christ's stead, the amazing thing happened: the crucified and risen Christ miraculously encountered men, and there was so to speak, an eschatological repetition of the Incarnation,

Death and Resurrection in them. Of that we have two sacraments, one in which the once-and-for-allness of that event is enshrined, and one in which its constant eschatological repetition is enshrined (" as often as . . . ye proclaim the Lord's death till He come "). This is the great mystery manifest in the flesh, the treasure which we have in earthen vessels, and of which we are stewards. That is to say, the relation of the Essential Ministry (as the Bishop of Oxford calls it) to Christ is not one of *shaliach*-identity or personal-mystical-identity, but one through the *kerygma* as the instrument of the Holy Ghost in the mouth of those called to be Apostles. It is this ministry which creates the Church—but in all cases the relation is essentially an eschatological relation through the Word and Spirit. A Bishop has *shaliach*-relation in this secondary sense only through the primary *shaliach*-relation of the Word-Spirit becoming event in the midst of the Church, creating the Church, becoming incarnate among men so that the Church becomes on earth, what it eternally is, the Body of Christ.

In this doctrine of the ministry the original Apostleship must be thought of as particular and unrepeatable, in the first instance, like the particularity of Jesus, or the particularity of the New Testament revelation. They form the actual place within the Church where the original event of the *Spirit-Shaliach* becomes once and for all incarnate in the language of the Church (that is, in the New Testament). Just as there can be no succession of Incarnations, no succession of New Testaments, so there can be no succession of Apostles in this primary sense. But there can be a succession of the ministry, as there can be repeated celebrations of the Eucharist: " For I received of the Lord that which I also delivered." The *paradosis* continues to be *kerygma*, for the Holy Ghost who is Christ's *Shaliach* lives on in the midst of the Church, and through the witness of men so speaks that it is Christ Himself speaking and creating. Every ministry whose *kerygma* becomes God's own testimony, *Logos* and *Dynamis*, is essential, is creative.

It is precisely because this volume omits the doctrine of the Holy Spirit that it really fails to understand the eschatological nature of *kerygma*, and *paradosis*. Consequently the Apostolic succession is interpreted in terms of temporal repetition, and the celebration of the Eucharist tends also to be interpreted in terms of a temporal repetition of the original sacrifice of Christ, while the Christian cleric becomes the one who temporally repeats in person and function the priesthood of Christ. There is a profound truth which the Roman Mass enshrines in its doctrine of repetition, but when that is translated into temporal terms, it amounts to

nothing but a travesty of the truth. In the teaching of the New Testament it is only Holy Ghost or eschatological repetition.

It is in the article by Fr. Hebert that we get down to the real pith of this book. He defines the position in true reformed style in these words: " We must look at the office of the Christian ministry in the relation of man to God which has been established in Christ; we must begin with the ministry of our redemption itself and with Him as the Head of the Church." He goes on to say, again in true reformed style (as if he had been reading Launcelot Andrewes!), that parallel to the union of God and man in Christ (two natures in one person, as the Creeds put it) we must think of the divine and human elements in the Church, for it too has a double nature, and is as such a mystery, a sacrament. " The two natures of the Church have been joined together by God, and men cannot put them asunder; they must be distinguished, but not either confused with one another or forced violently apart. It is disastrous to merge the divine element in the human, and invest the earthly and visible Church with the perfection that belongs to the divine element, thus in fact dragging down the divine element to earth and soiling it in the mud; we shall see later that this is the root of a fatal perversion of the idea of the Christian ministry. It is equally disastrous to make a separation, banishing the divine element up to heaven under the name of the Invisible Church and leaving the earthly community as a mere human organisation. We must hold fast to both sides, and grasp firmly the double truth that as a Church of God is at once divine and human, so in its earthly condition it is at once perfect and imperfect." Apart from the implied equation of perfect with divine, and imperfect with human, this is the true doctrine of the Church. What does Hebert mean by divine? According to *Chalcedon* the humanity of Christ is truly human, and His Deity truly divine. We cannot therefore think of the human element as divine in any sense. Is Hebert not giving a subtle twist to Chalcedonian christology here, parallel to the same subtle twist given by the Cappadocians through their doctrine of *krasis* to the humanity of Christ? Even after the Resurrection the humanity of Christ is perfectly human, never divine. There is such a thing as docetic heresy *post resurrectionem*!

There is no doubt that the Roman doctrine of the divinisation of the priest through grace so that (as the *Lateran Council* puts it) he becomes *divus*, is docetic heresy parallel to the transubstantiation of the worldly elements in the sacrament which is a docetic denial of the analogy inherent in the sacrament. Similarly their doctrine of the assumption of the manhood of Jesus into God ultimately means its divinisation. Seeds of this heresy are even to be found

in the great Athanasius—and it had to be corrected at *Chalcedon*. If we take *Chalcedon* seriously, as these writers profess to do, particularly the definition of the hypostatic union by the words ἀσυγχύτως, ἀτρέπτως, ἀδιαιρέτως, ἀχωσίστως, then we admit that between the divine and human elements in Christ there is no fusion, no conversion, no division, no separation. This book on the Apostolic Ministry sins against the ἀσυγχύτως in no half-hearted fashion. Hebert is quite right in saying that we must think of the Church as involving two natures, a divine and a human. But the divine is no Arian nature, nor any divinising of the human element. The divine element is the Holy Ghost, or rather Christ Himself the Head of the Church. The human element is the body which composes all creatures who believe and are incorporated into Christ, sacramentally incorporated, but are never anything else in themselves but human and creaturely.

To get ourselves clear about the principle involved here, let us take the words: *Hoc est corpus meum*. That is neither a proposition of identity, nor of difference. It is an analogical proposition of a unique sort. It is in the Incarnation that we have created for the first time in the union between God and Man in Christ (not finally at Bethlehem, but at the Cross and Resurrection also) a relation which we now know as *unio hypostatica sive personalis*, as the Reformed Anglican divines used to put it. And that relation we believe to be grounded upon the immanent relation within the transcendent Trinity. But that same relation, the *unio hypostatica*, is, as it were, projected through the Holy Ghost on to the third level to form the relation between Christ and His Church, between the real presence and the bread and the wine in the Eucharist, between the divine Word and the human speech in the *kerygma*: and that relation St. Paul calls *koinonia*. When we examine this relation in the light of *Chalcedon*, the classic definition of it, we see that on the one hand it is not a relation of identity, but on the other hand it is not one of difference. It is a *sui generis* relation grounded upon the act of the Trinity in Christ Jesus, and is manifest in the Church. It is upon this that the eschatological relation in the New Testament is also grounded: the very relation that forms the content of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit (see K. L. Schmidt, *Eranos Jahrbuch* for 1945). It is the doctrine of the relation of the personal presence of God to the Church such that the gift of the Spirit is identical with the Giver; such that the Spirit cannot be possessed any more than one person can possess another. It is possession in terms of *koinonia*, that is, in terms of the hypostatic union.

Now it is the whole thesis of *The Apostolic Ministry* that this is not the case. Instead they dare to posit a relation of identity,

mystical identity, personal identity, between the Bishop-Apostle and Christ Himself. It is such an identity that the Holy Ghost can be passed on, as if He were not the Giver of the Gift, but only the Gift. Consequently it unbends the hypostatic or Holy Ghost relation into a straight line, and turns eschatology into temporal succession on the ground of this relation of identity. The parallel in the doctrine of the sacrament is of course the temporal repetition of the sacrifice of Christ, and the transubstantiation of the worldly elements in such a way that the analogical relation is denied, as Calvin argued so cogently in the *Institutes*, and a relation of identity put in its place. This is sheer Arianism in the region of the sacrament and the ministry. That is most apparent in the Roman doctrine of the Mass which is an extremely low doctrine inasmuch as it does not teach a doctrine of the real presence. Christ's presence only comes half-way, and the worldly element is divinised or raised up by transubstantiation to meet it. This was precisely what Nicaea denied in the doctrine of Christology proper, but the Church did not go on to apply that correction to the shape of the liturgy or the form of the Church. It is to such a misshapen liturgy and mis-formed doctrine of the Church that this volume reaches back for justification of Anglo-Catholic doctrine.

It is Fr. Hebert who sees these issues most clearly. In the passage cited he warns us against dragging the divine element down to earth and soiling it. But what else is that but the doctrine that the Bishop-Apostles are invested in their human persons with a relation of identity to Christ, and with the gift or the *paradosis* of the Holy Ghost which they can pass from Bishop to Bishop? What else is this but a denial of the eschatological relation in which the divine is present, really and fully present, but not tied to institutions of space and time? The thesis of this book is in basic contradiction to the teaching of the New Testament which so clearly tells us, for example, in the Gospel stories of the Transfiguration and of the Emmaeus manifestation that by our human institutions, even if dominically appointed, we cannot perpetuate in the continuity of space and time the risen Jesus Christ. He inevitably vanishes out of our sight at that point for His *parousia* is both a *presence* and a *coming*. It is this eschatological doubleness (Chalcedonian doubleness) in sacrament and *kerygma*, and in the ministry, that this volume ultimately leaves out. Its sin is a desire for continuity in space and time of possession of God, so that the eschatological, Kingdom-of-God-event in the Gospel which is creative of the Church is imprisoned in a human institution, in the unbroken continuum of space and time they choose to call Apostolic Succession.

It would appear that these points are not unrecognised by Hebert. He sees the danger of Arianism when he says it would be monstrous to think either of the Apostles or of the ministry as a sort of third element, mediating between Christ and the Church, His Body, but he promptly falls into the more subtle error of Eutychianism. In the same way he sees the danger of Nestorianism in repudiating the idea that the cleric has vicarial relation, as if he were acting on behalf of an absent Christ. Almost in the same breath he sees the fatal mistake of identifying the Word of God with the word of man, but does not see the equally fatal mistake of identifying the Person of Christ with the person of the Bishop. The fact is, that when he comes to relate this true doctrine of the Church to the doctrine of the episcopate that is advanced in these pages, he fails miserably. He does not succeed in finding a single dogmatic argument on Chalcedonian principles to prove that the Bishop belongs to the very *esse* of the Church, or to prove that this doctrine of the Essential Ministry is one of the articles of saving faith. In the last resort, all he can say is that " there *needs to be* an office in the Church ", and so falls back lamely upon an argument of expediency which he himself castigates in others!

There is one other major point at which we see the perversity of heresy manifesting itself. Hebert sees it too, and he is careful to avoid it. He maintains in true Pauline fashion that the Church is both perfect and imperfect on earth, what the Reformers indicated in their expression *justus et peccator*. But Dom Gregory Dix denies this outright, because he has a much crasser idea of the mystical relation of identity. He says: " It is a difference about the nature of man's fall and the process of his union with God; that is, it is admittedly a difference about the very notion of ' religion ' itself." It is quite plain that Dix has never come to grips with the doctrine of justification, else he would not have enunciated a position so contradictory to *Chalcedon*, particularly to the " without conversion". It must surely be evident that on the showing of these men themselves the principles of christology must be applied to the relation of the Christian to Christ, to the relation between *peccator* and *justus*, particularly if we see that we must carry the thought of the hypostatic union through Christ's Death and Resurrection. The Christian, like the Church, has two " natures ", the " I yet not I " of Gal. 2.20. There is, so to speak, a hypostatic relation between these two—*so to speak*, for the hypostatic relation is unique, but as in the sacraments so here we must by its light think out justification and sanctification. Thus the Christian must be regarded as perfect in Christ, and as such he is hid with Christ in God; but as a visible psychological personality, he is still *peccator*. To attempt to resolve

this quasi-hypostatic or eschatological relation into a process of union in which man is gradually made more and more just and divine, is to flout the " without fusion and without conversion " of *Chalcedon*. It is the essence of the Reformed doctrine of justification by grace alone that it insists on teaching the virgin birth of faith, and a relation sacramentally and eschatologically created, parallel to the hypostatic relation, between justification as a once-and-for-all act (sacramentally, Baptism), and the constant renewal of sanctification (sacramentally, the Eucharist). Once again, had Dom Gregory Dix read his Anglican divines properly, he would not have been ignorant of this, nor would he have proclaimed himself to be convicted of a doctrine so unbiblical, un-christological, and un-Anglican.

I have had hard things to say about this book, but I believe that if you strike out the christological heresy which gives its exposition a fatal twist, much of its teaching will fall into astonishingly true form which could provide a common ground on which Reformed and Anglican theologians and scholars might draw nearer to one another than ever before.

T. F. Torrance

III

The Ministry of the Church is a reprint of the reviews of the much-discussed volume, *The Apostolic Ministry*, which have appeared in *The Record*, to which has been added a preliminary chapter by Bishop Stephen Neill. For its scope and size it is about as good as anything could be; and it is highly satisfactory to find that progressive Evangelicals within the Church of England are rousing themselves to vigorous and effective warfare against a theory of the Church and ministry whose doctrinal implications strike at the very heart of their Evangelicalism. Something like a note of " righteous wrath " can be heard from time to time in these articles, and inasmuch as this note is sounded in the tones of first-rate scholarship, it is very welcome. The task of the writers was indeed a formidable one. They had to deal with a volume vast in bulk, heavily weighted with erudition, and abounding in historical constructions and generalisations of a very far-reaching kind. The number of effective criticisms which they have been able to make within so small a compass is really astonishing.

In the main, they have concerned themselves with three lines of attack. They have set themselves to show first of all how slender are the assured historical data from which so vast a web of theory has been spun. Next they have vigorously contended that the doctrine of the ministry under discussion is opposed to the view

of the Church of England as expressed in its Prayer Book and its authoritative theologians right down to the nineteenth century. Here they had a relatively easy task, and it is no exaggeration to say that their judgment has been completely vindicated by the recently published paper of Dr. Norman Sykes entitled "The Church of England and Non-Episcopal Churches in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries". And finally, and most important of all, they have shown that the acceptance of the doctrine in question involves a rejection of the fundamental doctrinal position of the English Church as a Church of the Reformation; and so they have set themselves to criticise the theological presuppositions of the book under review.

Their case would, we think, have been made still stronger had they had space and occasion to deal with one matter which certainly calls for elucidation. They are at one in repudiating the idea that episcopacy belongs to the *esse* of the Church, but they are disposed to uphold the claim that it belongs to its *bene esse*. Now this may very well be, but it is necessary to point out that the *bene esse* of the Church must be grounded theologically as definitely as its *esse*. What precisely is meant by the necessity of episcopacy to the *bene esse* of the Church? Certainly something more than if it should be said that the Congregational or Presbyterian principle is thus necessary. For these writers are speaking of episcopacy in its historic form, that is to say, as something bound up with the principle of succession. They feel that this succession should be preserved. They are certainly willing that the South India experiment with its two types of ministry, the episcopal and the non-episcopal within one Church should be temporally accepted, and Bishop Stephen Neill very effectively points out that at two periods of Anglican history such an arrangement has been so accepted. But they are apparently convinced that such a state of things can be only temporary, and that the historic episcopate must be universally accepted in the interests of Church unity. Now the non-episcopal Churches have the right to ask why this should be. It will not do simply to point to the service of episcopacy in signalising and symbolising the unity and continuity of the Church, for these very terms "unity" and "continuity" as applied to the *Church* are theological terms calling for theological interpretation. In short, if episcopacy be advocated as essential to the *bene esse* of the Church, the relation of this particular form of the ministry to the Lordship of Christ and the doctrine of justification by faith alone must be theologically formulated. We mention this matter because we do not believe that an Evangelical Church can regard the matter of its constitution as at any point a

closed question. Much hard thinking still awaits to be done here.

But to return to the subject-matter of these chapters, many who read them will find themselves wondering how it comes to pass that the theory of the ministry therein exposed continues to hold sway over the minds of learned and devout men. Where the historical data are open to so much diverse interpretation, how is it possible to erect upon them a structure in which are involved the very interests of man's salvation? Certainly the writers of *The Apostolic Ministry* are less concerned with specifically historical conclusions than with matters of theological principle. None the less these very matters as they hold them are inextricably bound up with historical conclusions which fall far short of certainty. Can the "ark of salvation" as Dr. Kirk calls the Church be furnished with so many points of doubtful strength? Now there can be little doubt but that one of the motives lying behind all this insistence on the necessity of episcopacy is that of apprehension lest the acid of criticism which is eating away at the historical foundations of the traditional doctrine of the ministry should bring to the ground the whole edifice of historic Christianity. Christianity as an observable historic magnitude capable of resisting heresy, and withstanding the natural forces making for dissolution, speedily showed itself in the world as a compact structure made up of Bible, Creed and Episcopate. These three elements proved essential, or at any rate highly valuable, to the Church in its struggle against a Gnosticism which, as the late Dr. Forsyth said, would have strangled Christianity in its cradle. It therefore seems to many that they are bound to one another by ties which cannot be broken without imperilling the whole edifice of historic Christianity. They feel that the same kind of critical considerations which would undermine the traditional ministry are at work undermining the historic faith of Christendom. Thus Dr. Kirk places in a kind of parallelism the means of grace (the word and sacraments) and an essential ministry of grace (represented now by the episcopate), and contends that the one cannot stand at last without the other. But he fails to show any organic connexion between the latter and the former. His concern is with the idea of validity, and that idea implies a kind of guarantee added on, as it were, to the substance of the faith. Without this guarantee, word and sacraments cannot maintain themselves in their true nature. But can this apprehension stand as a legitimate motive? Is it not at least in danger of becoming lack of faith?

But more cogent than this subtle and perhaps unconscious apprehension is a deep and passionate conviction that the essence of the gospel is to be identified with what is called "the sacramental

principle"; and the perception that this sacramental principle involves perpetual personal representation of our Lord to and within His Church, and therefore an "essential ministry" which is not at the disposal or under the control of the Church. The writers of *The Apostolic Ministry* want it to be established without dispute that at the Communion they really take Christ into the hand and into the mouth, that at baptism and confirmation the Holy Spirit is directly poured out, that the Eucharist is identical with the sacrifice of the Lord upon the Cross, that the fundamental operations and decisions of the Church are identical with Christ's own acts. They make much of the "mystical union" between Christ and the Church, and this "mystical union" is, at its depths, an identity. Thus Christ in His own person is, so to speak, transmitted all down the stream of the Church's life, and an essential ministry proceeding by devolution becomes necessary to the Church's existence. Now of course the essence of the gospel became identified with this "sacramental principle" at a comparatively early date, and therefore the evidence for this "essential ministry" can be made to look very impressive. But were things so from the beginning? It is vital to the writer's purpose to demonstrate that they were; and Dr. Stephen Neill is amply justified in suggesting "that the conclusions were reached before the evidence was considered, that a certain structure of thought has been imposed on the facts rather than deduced from them, and that pre-suppositions lurk all the time in the background, without ever being brought out into the daylight and dispassionately discussed". Of course the crucial question is whether the essence of the gospel is in fact to be identified with this sacramental principle. If it is not, the whole case for the essential ministry goes by the board, as Dom Gregory Dix clearly perceives, and the detailed and intensive study of the history of the ministry becomes, as he says, little more than a scholarly pastime.

Now the Church of England, in ranging itself with the Reformation principle of justification by faith alone, detached itself in principle from this identification, and deliberately set up a ministry different in kind from the Roman ministry in which that identification had been made complete. As Mr. Taylor says: "The intention of the Ordinal, sufficiently testified by its contents and by the practice and writings of three centuries of Anglican history indicated a desire to produce a ministry which was invalid by the Catholic standards of the day." This does not, of course, settle the question of truth. But it is a serious matter when an attempt is made to dominate Anglican practice with a view of the ministry which involves an interpretation of the Christian faith

which the Church of England started its course by repudiating, and which to many is a grave perversion of New Testament Christianity. While the matter remains thus, controversy is an imperative duty, and this controversy cannot remain a matter of mere scholarly and academic discussion. It is good to read the words of Bishop Stephen Neill: " those of us who reject the doctrine of the Church and ministry set forth in *The Apostolic Ministry*, reject it not on grounds of minute differences on points of archaeological interpretation, but because we cannot recognise as Christian the doctrine of God which seems to underlie this imposing theological edifice." It is high time that this was made unmistakably clear.

In this connexion we cannot but think it strange that the authors of the work in dispute quote so many passages from ancient writers which are flagrantly opposed to the whole tenour of the New Testament, without exclaiming against them, and without apparently perceiving that they set forth a view of the ministry which has little or nothing in common with that of the New Testament. It may be useful to take one example, perhaps the most flagrant of all. In the Epistle to the Hebrews there are these beautiful words about the ministry: " obey them that have the rule over you, and submit to them; for they watch on behalf of your souls, as they that shall give account; that they may do this with joy and not with grief; for this were unprofitable for you." Now compare with this, words from the Syrian *Didascalia Apostolorum* quoted by Dr. Jalland: " This man (the bishop) is your chief and your leader and he is your mighty king. He rules in the place of the Almighty; let him be honoured by you as God, for the bishop sits for you in the place of God Almighty. But the deacon stands in the place of Christ: and do you love him. And the deaconess shall be honoured by you in the place of the Holy Spirit: and the presbyters shall be to you in the likeness of the apostles; and the orphans and widows shall be reckoned by you in the likeness of the altar." What can outrageous and blasphemous nonsense such as this demonstrate but that a monstrous perversion had come over the whole conception of the ministry? And if, as Dr. Jalland maintains, the ideas underlying these words are fairly representative of those which were current in Syria in the earlier part of the third century, can there be any doubt but that the historical causes which led to the exaltation of the episcopate over every other form of ministry are not such as to validate that exaltation? If, as the writers declare, there was a process by means of which the alleged " plenipotentiary " character of the apostles passed over to the episcopate, that process can claim no divine authorisation.

The authors of these reviews very properly insist on the significance of the fact that the word priest is never used in the New Testament to designate the ministry. But the doctrine of the apostolic succession is through and through sacerdotal. Deprive the historic episcopate of its sacerdotal significance, and who would be found to contend for it as the " essential ministry " of the Church? What then has taken place historically? The answer would appear to be this, though it is rejected almost contemptuously by Dom Gregory Dix: an original ministry which was in essence charismatic, that is a ministry which functioned because on it the Spirit *came*, developed into a ministry which was in essence sacerdotal, that is a ministry in which the Spirit was *transmitted*; and the turning point of this change lay in the fact that the apostles did actually ordain. This we believe with Hans Lietzmann to be the interpretation of the much discussed passage in the Epistle of Clement. When once apostleship (and prophetism) had reached the end of their course as clearly defined offices and functions within the Church, they reappeared as sacerdotal and sacramental functions in the episcopate, and this took place because of the simple fact that circumstances made it necessary to make provision for the continuance of the ministry. But whatever the historical process may have been, two facts stand clear for all to see: first that a ministry to which no priestly term is applied appears in the New Testament, and second that a ministry in which priestly conceptions are uppermost emerges as soon as episcopacy with its monopolist claims is on the field.

We believe that the doctrine of the " essential ministry " as it is expounded in *The Apostolic Ministry* lies in ruins both historically and theologically. That is not to say that episcopacy is not capable of theological justification, nor is it to say that no priestly functions inhere in the ministerial office. And most certainly it does not mean that the " sacramental principle " does not contain a core of mighty truth. But it does mean that the " succession " principle must be abandoned. Unless the Christian ministry be delivered from all dependence on the principle of temporal and tactual succession, it is difficult to see how any other theology of it is at last possible than that which appears in *The Apostolic Ministry*.

F. W. Camfield

BOOK REVIEWS

God was in Christ. By D. M. Baillie. Faber & Faber. 16s.

This work has already rightly received high praise. It is a work of a quite extraordinary honesty and grace. No reader of the *Scottish Journal of Theology* will need any recommendation to read it: what follows will therefore take the shape of a brief indication of its strength and weakness.

Its strength is in the author's honesty and profundity. He does see that the person of Christ presents a supreme problem: he sees too that it is just no use brushing aside as so much irrelevance the great difficulties traditional doctrinal formulae present to those educated in modern science and philosophy. He sees that if the neo-orthodox brush such hesitancies aside with a too easy appeal to " the necessity of an ontological as distinct from a psychological approach ", they are in danger of denying to the event of Christ its unique significance and its universal embrace. Dr. Baillie takes the epistemological problems relating to christological dogma seriously, not because he sees the danger of construing a complex of relations of inwardness in terms of the formal ontology favoured by traditional orthodoxy. Although it seems that his denial of the *anhypostasia* robs him in the end of the possibility of distinguishing the grace of union from sanctifying grace, one must not misconceive his motives. The conception of an impersonal humanity stated thus is abominably difficult. To say this is not to make concession to the mentality of " how much will Jones swallow? " It is to recognise a fact. Dr. Baillie sees that after the episode of the " quest of the historical Jesus ", men can only come to rest in a Jesus who is verily flesh of our flesh, bone of our bone. Accordingly we have to express the mystery of what He ultimately is in terms that do not trivialise or make non-significant His historical human reality. Nestorianism is certainly the besetting heresy of our day and generation: for us the judgment of faith that will take us beyond that impossible position must be made, as it were, round and over that human reality of flesh and blood that men saw and touched and handled. I do not say that Dr. Baillie's analysis of that judgment is deep enough. I only say that he puts his finger in the right place in emphasising the cruciality of the epistemological problem.

" What is it like to confess Christ God? " This question is sometimes asked rather than: " How is the union of God and man possible in Him? " Unless we start where Dr. Baillie starts, this

change of question can easily trick us into the sort of indifference to the historical Jesus that he detects in Tillich. But starting where he does, the transformation of the question can be justified and may be found illuminating. For there we see in Christ, in the words of the epistle to the Hebrews, " the author and finisher of our faith ", and as it were predicate divinity of Him in so far as we find in Him the source of that miracle of faith we find in ourselves, and the ground of its possibility.

If I understand Dr. Baillie at all, he says in effect that Christology rests on the correspondence between that which in the New Testament is disclosed as belonging to the historical reality of Christ and that which we know in ourselves as the fruit of the relation with God into which He brings us. Obviously his Christology is akin in its starting-point to that which Hoskyns and Davey offer towards the end of the *Riddle of the New Testament*, when they write of Jesus. It is something thrust on him by what the Scriptures say, but a paradox vitalised and illuminated by the familiar mystery of grace, " I, yet not I ".

But in the end we come back to the question of how invasion of the soul by God in grace is related to the union of God and man in Christ. Analogy—yes. But what is analogy? We say the former is a splintered reflection of the latter: but the reflection depends on what is being reflected. And that? Can we escape the *anhypostasia* as easily as Dr. Baillie does? Was not the traditional insistence on God as the subject of the Incarnate Life an oblique proclamation that in this astounding obliteration of self-will, this boundless receptivity, this relentless abandonment of all possibilities of achievement as the world counts achievement, there was a presence of God unparalleled, fontal, creative?

But this is a truly profound book that demands to be read and re-read. And perhaps its author suggests the means whereby its worst weaknesses may be corrected; for he insists that Christian theology must be Christocentric, and that is something which it repeatedly forgets to be. In his own discussion of the relation of the eternal to the temporal atonement, Dr. Baillie takes an important step in showing that the Christian faith proclaimed Christ as the very point of cosmic integration. He does not take this theme as far as F. D. Maurice for instance took it, or the Belgian Jesuit E. Mersch in his posthumous *Théologie du Corps Mystique*, partly because his mind is too subtle to be at ease as they are in unconditional ontological assertion. But in his delicate discussion of the Lamb of God he comes to the threshold of recognising that a radically Christocentric theism must end by conceiving the very being of the time order itself, in its relation to God, in terms of

Christ. One may hope that Professor Baillie may go on to treat the theme of the cosmic Christ at far greater length: his sense of the historical Jesus is so sure that we can rely on him not to generalise the particularity away into abstract principles. If his book fails in the end to achieve quite all one looks for, it is perhaps because the author is almost afraid to draw the threads together: and it is curious to note his seeming anxiety to avoid dealing in any detail with the Resurrection, which would perhaps serve as just that point of integration his exposition lacks. What is the explanation of this omission?

D. M. MACKINNON

Jesus the Son of Man. By G. S. DUNCAN. Nisbet. 16s.

PRINCIPAL DUNCAN's reputation as a *Neutestamentler* is associated for most of us with his book on *St. Paul's Ephesian Ministry* (which, whether we accepted its conclusions or not, compelled most of us to reconsider the traditional provenance of the Prison Epistles), and with an excellent commentary on Galatians. But those of us who read his essay on the Gospels in *The Christian Faith* were aware that he was keenly interested in the problems of the Synoptics and "the quest of the historical Jesus". In his Croall Lectures, delivered in Edinburgh in 1937 and now published under the title of *Jesus the Son of Man*, he has given us the fruit of his thinking on the mission, message and person of Jesus as the Gospels reveal Him. Not the Synoptic Gospels only, for it is one of the encouraging features of this book that it shows "a growing readiness to find real historical value in the evidence of the Fourth Gospel not merely as regards episodes (as e.g. an early Judaean ministry, and the date of the Last Supper) but also (and this is especially significant) as regards much of the teaching" (p. 16).

In the first of the book's three parts Dr. Duncan outlines the critical quest for the historical Jesus (insisting rightly that He cannot be separated from the Christ of faith) with special reference to (*a*) what he calls "the Barthian reaction" and (*b*) *Formgeschichte* for which, though critical of its negations, he has a good word to say. Then he discusses the message of Jesus as truth about God and truth about man, first as it is rooted in the Old Testament and then as it is set forth in the Gospels. For Dr. Duncan the Kingdom of God in the Gospels means the Fatherly Rule of God—it is God's saving purpose to bring men into a realm of right relationships with Himself, of which Jesus the Son of Man is the agent.

In Part II Dr. Duncan writes at length of the Person of Jesus. Here, though he does not think Jesus set much store by titles, he

discusses Jesus first in relation to the Baptist and then as Son of God, Messiah and Son of Man. Dr. Duncan has some unusual things to say here. Thus, he thinks that John the Baptist when he asked from prison, "Art thou he that cometh?" meant not the Messiah but Elijah the fiery prophet. Again, he believes that the Baptism experience for Jesus was not a revelation of Messiahship but of Sonship, and he doubts if Jesus ever thought of Himself as the Messiah. "Messiahship was not a category in which Jesus could find satisfaction" (p. 131). Finally, he thinks that Jesus may have spoken of Himself as *bar adam* rather than, as is generally assumed, as *bar nasha*, and he goes on to argue that the term Son of Man on Jesus' lips is not an apocalyptic term at all but is derived from Ezekiel and denotes the ideal Man, "the Man in whom God's purposes for mankind and for the world should be fulfilled". The mission of the Son of Man found its climax in the Cross, which is properly regarded as a sacrifice—the self-sacrifice of the Shepherd for the lost sheep of God's humanity, in order that He "might bring them home to God". When Dr. Duncan, in the last chapter of this section, comes to consider "The Triumph of Jesus", he finds it much more difficult to reach clear conclusions. For we may not lightly assume that the Early Church's three-fold eschatological scheme of Resurrection, Ascension and Parousia exactly reflects the mind of Jesus. (He points out, in passing, that the Ascension is recorded only in Acts 1, the words in Luke 14.51 "and he was carried up into heaven" being a later addition). When we study our Lord's own words, we find that certain sayings which might *prima facie* seem to refer to the Parousia, probably had no such meaning on His lips. Thus Mark 9.1 (whether Dr. Dodd's proposed translation be right or not) probably refers not to a Second Advent but to some such event as befell on the Day of Pentecost. (Why not, we suggest, to the Resurrection and Pentecost? Cf. Rom. 1.4, "declared to be the Son of God *with power* . . . by the resurrection of the dead"). Again, Mark 14.62, with its clear echo of Daniel 7.13, is probably a prediction not of Parousia but of Enthronement. (Since Dr. Duncan wrote, Dr. Glasson has made this exegesis almost certain.) Dr. Duncan will not have it that Jesus shared the (mistaken) belief in certain quarters of the Early Church that He was destined to come back almost immediately in apocalyptic splendour. He assumes, however, without proof that the sayings about the Day of the Son of Man in the apocalypse refer to the Day of Judgment. Some of them certainly do not, and we would like to see more attention given to the theory of Weiffenbach (adopted cautiously by Dodd) that the Day of the Son of Man may well have been, in our Lord's mind, the Day of

His Triumph, i.e. the Day of His Resurrection. (It is very curious that in our earliest sources we have sayings of Jesus which predict that the Son of Man will die and then will rise, and sayings which predict the Son of Man's death to be followed by the Day of the Son of Man, but no saying in our Gospels in which Jesus says that He will die, rise, and come again.) In the end, after a full discussion, Dr. Duncan points to the ethic of Jesus as proof that Jesus believed in the " continued existence of the world ", though holding fast His conviction of the final triumph of God's redeeming purpose for mankind.

In Part III Dr. Duncan writes of Jesus and the Church. Jesus clearly envisaged a new society of which the disciples whom He trained were to be the nucleus. This he calls " the fellowship of Jesus—redeemed and redeeming ". But the Early Church, though it conserved the main elements in our Lord's message, deviated in some respects from it, notably in their insistence on the Messiahship of Jesus. Dr. Duncan points out that, although it is commonly assumed that the Primitive Church universally believed in a speedy Parousia, the evidence of Acts is against it. (" In the early chapters of Acts there is only one clear reference to the Return of Christ, and it says nothing of an early Return.") The truth would seem to be (he says) that both Jesus and the earliest disciples " looked forward with unwavering confidence to the final triumph of God's purposes " without indulging in explicit teaching as to what the final triumph implied. The last chapter of the book sums up conclusions and discusses the Christian's place and duty in the modern world. We who are followers of Jesus and live under the Fatherly Rule of God are summoned, in the face of the world's indifference, to witness fearlessly for the truth which Jesus came to bring.

This is a sketchy but, we hope, not unfair summary of a very honest and deeply Christian book. It is written with grace and simplicity, so that even those who are not experts in New Testament criticism will read it with ease. It deals with the most central things in the New Testament. We hope that it will be widely read and will provoke discussion. For it contains some things with which we should disagree. Thus, we think that Dr. Duncan's conception of the Kingdom of God, which is reminiscent of Harnack's view, does not do full justice to the essentially eschatological and dynamic character of the *Basileia* in the Synoptic Gospels. It is true that God's purpose in exercising His saving sovereignty is to bring men into right relationship with Himself. But one misses in Dr. Duncan's treatment the sense of the living God intervening directly and once for all on the stage of human history in the person of Jesus, as one misses also the dynamic quality of the

Basileia in the Gospels—a point well taken by Gloege and others. It is only a corollary of this if we say that in the Gospels (particularly Mark, the earliest) the Ministry of Jesus is seen not so much as a Teaching Tour as a great Campaign against the powers of evil. Moreover, we think Dr. Duncan mistaken in deriving the Son of Man title from Ezekiel, and not from Daniel. It does not seem to us that Ezekiel's conception of the son of man bears much spiritual relation to our Lord's use of the title, nor do we find in Ezekiel's usage that close connexion between the Son of Man and the Kingdom which undoubtedly exists in Daniel 7. Furthermore, we doubt if Dr. Duncan (though he quotes Origen's phrase *Autobasileia*) sufficiently emphasises the fact that Jesus incarnates the Reign of God in His own person and ministry, so that Marcion's dictum is profoundly true: *In Evangelio est Dei regnum Christus ipse.*

But these are points on which, likely as not, other readers will think Dr. Duncan right and the reviewer wrong. The main point is that this book should re-open a lively discussion of them. It is one of the most stimulating contributions to New Testament theology which we have had from a Scottish New Testament scholar for some time, and it will enhance Principal Duncan's already distinguished reputation.

We have noted misprints on pp. 20, 185 and 186.

A. M. Hunter

The Oracles of God: An Introduction to the Preaching of John Calvin. By T. H. L. Parker. Lutterworth Press. 12s. 6d.

This is a book which opens up to us a much forgotten Calvin. For too long Calvin himself has been obscured behind the so-called systematic theologian, but the truth is that Calvin did not originally intend to be a systematic theologian, and no one was more surprised than he when he was hailed as such after the early editions of the *Institutes*. He wrote the *Institutes*, he tells us, in order to send men back to the study of their Bibles with renewed vigour and a better understanding of how to use and interpret Scripture. For him the relevance of theology lay in the fact that it is the servant of the preacher. That is the Calvin which we have set forth in this learned study. With exact scholarship and vivid clarity we are taken to the real heart of the great Reformer as he wrestled with the Word of God in all his weakness as a frail man, and used all the gifts at his disposal to make plain the message of the Gospel, and to apply it to the circumstances of his day.

It is the author's avowed purpose not only to present us with a fragment of Church History, but to present that in such a way

that it may serve as a stimulus to those engaged week by week, as Calvin was, with the preaching of the Word, and as a call to return to the expository sermon and that high doctrine of preaching which obtained at the time of the Reformation. The volume begins with a survey of preaching before Calvin, and ends with a chapter on Calvin's influence on English preaching, and a chapter recalling us to preaching as essentially the exposition of Holy Scripture, as the declaration of the ambassador of Christ, and as the work of the Holy Spirit. The body of the work comprises three chapters on *Calvin as Preacher*, *The Doctrine of Preaching*, *Ars Praedicandi*, and *Calvin's Gospel*. There is no doubt that Mr. Parker has succeeded brilliantly in giving us an informative and challenging volume which every minister engaged with preaching should read, and ponder very carefully, and then turn himself to the great library of Calvin's expositions and sermons to which this serves so ably as an introduction.

One of the points to which the author constantly recalls us in his exposition of Calvin is that the preacher must preach only as one who has himself heard the Word, and only preach what he has heard. " It were better for him to break his neck going up into the pulpit, if he does not take pains to be the first to follow God " (p. 60; C.R. 26, p. 304). How often, in contrast, the preacher to-day although called to be a servant of the Word is actually a free-lance thinker who expresses his own views, and is therefore no genuine mouthpiece of the Church, far less, as Calvin would have said, " the mouth of God " (p. 54). This book does us therefore a great service in recalling the Church to a fresh consideration of its responsibility in the pulpit. Preaching is expounded as the act of obedient service in the Church which makes room for and gives audible articulation to the Word in her midst. It is the great sacrament of the Word in which certainly more is said than done, for it is the presence of the Spirit which makes it a sacrament, but in which the speaking of the Word has a place of supreme importance, for without it there would be no sacrament at all, and no presence of Christ to listening ears and believing hearts. Thus in preaching the Church believes there takes place a supreme spiritual act in which the whole of the Church's worship and obedience is centred. It is the preacher's task to give utterance to the Oracles of God, to proclaim the Word of the Gospel, in which the Spirit of God comes Himself and acts, so that the word of man becomes the very Word of God.

Another fact expounded in these pages is that formulation of theology is the task of the pastor (p. 57)—hence Mr. Parker gives over a whole chapter to delineating the theology of Calvin as it

arises out of his preaching (p. 81 f.). And this theology is necessary to preaching itself, because it protects the preacher from preaching himself, and enables him to pass on faithfully only what he has received. It is this which enables him to say, in effect if not always in words, " Thus saith the Lord ". Thus it is essentially the substance and not the form which makes preaching (p. 66). Contrary to what some scholars have declared, it is showed in these pages that Calvin exercised himself a good deal over the art of preaching, but never to such an extent as to alter the fact that preaching must be largely objective—that is, such preaching that the Word of God is allowed to speak for itself, even in spite of the preacher. It is doubtless true that there is no greater need in the Church to-day than to take to heart these lessons from the great preacher of Geneva.

The volume closes with an Appendix giving a specimen sermon by Calvin, and a very useful summary of information about Calvin's preaching, and his published and unpublished sermons. Mr. Parker is to be congratulated on a very excellent piece of work, and it is to be hoped that he will complete it by making some of these sermons available in modern English.

T. F. Torrance.

Moses. By Martin Buber. Oxford: Phaidon Press, East and West Library, 1946. pp. 226. 12s. 6d.

In the section dealing with Moses' negotiations with Pharaoh, Buber writes: " Even here, in this fantastic popular narrative, intended as it is to bring to later generations of the nation a sense of the one-time passage of their history from wonder to wonder, we feel the breath of some distant event of which there is no longer any clear-cut recollection. Only the might of metamorphosing mythopoeic remembering bears witness identifiable throughout all its fantastic work. There are two recognised approaches in this regard; that of the person accepting traditions entire, holding that everything written here records something that has happened in fact in some specific place at some specific time; and that of the self-assured professional scholar who proposes to treat everything recorded here as literature pure and simple, and believes that he can relate it all to, and comprehend it by, literary categories. Between these two there must be a third, which is our own.

" We must adopt the critical approach and seek reality, here as well, by asking ourselves what human relation to real events this could have been which led gradually, along many bypaths

and by way of many metamorphoses, from mouth to ear, from one memory to another, and from dream to dream, until it grew into the written account we have read. It is certainly not a chronicle which we have to work on, but it is equally not imaginative poesy; it is a historical saga" (p. 61).

It is by this method that Buber attempts his reconstruction of the figure and work of Moses. Distrusting the analysis of the Biblical text into "source documents", he tries, with each incident and episode, to penetrate to the original experience which gave rise to the record and which, however dimly remembered and however much altered in the course of years, can generally be discerned, either by direct analysis or by inference. The result is a very different kind of Moses from the one to which the scholarship of the last fifty years has accustomed us. He is not merely a real historical person, but, Buber believes, his figure and work were, as a matter of historical fact, very much such as the tradition represents them. He did experience much of what is recorded of him, and he did inaugurate the bulk of what is claimed for him. For example, the Passover goes back to him. So also does the first form of the Decalogue. The Ark also is his—Buber has no doubt that it was Moses who gave it its significance in Israel, and that the various strands of tradition connected with it find their harmony in him. Even the general lines of Israel's land-law, which is generally believed to have taken shape only in Canaan, were actually drawn up by Moses during the stay at Kadesh. Thus Buber holds that from a scientific analysis of the text—and there is point in his reminder that that is after all what we must go out from—all attempts to impugn the historicity of Moses must fail, and he stands out once again in the stature which the faith of his people gave him.

As to the greatness of Moses' work, Buber holds that "the men whom we call founders of religions are not really concerned with founding a religion, but wish to establish a human world that is subject to a divine truth; to unite the way of the earth with that of heaven" (p. 8 f.). It was the "divine truth" revealed to Moses at the Burning Bush which laid down the lines of all his work, and all that he did, in law as well as in religion and the cult, was the attempt to make the truth, which he himself had apprehended, real and effective in the community. Thus, in line with the best of modern scholarship, Buber sees in the history of Israel not history only, but history made by a Faith.

Certain details in the book are of interest, even if it is only for the challenge which they offer to re-examine some of the conclusions which are widely accepted to-day almost without question. For

example, Buber uncompromisingly—and, many would agree, justly—rejects the Kenite hypothesis, and equates the God revealed at Sinai with " the God of the fathers ". He also holds that the evidence brought that not all the twelve tribes were in Egypt is " a long way from conclusive ". He has also provocative things to say about the Covenant and the Decalogue. Even if his own rejection of some of the accepted positions leaves one wishing sometimes that he had argued his case instead of contenting himself with what is little more than a pronouncement, still there are challenges here which cannot be ignored.

Two things are of particular value in Buber's study. One is that, in line with much of modern scholarship, he sees that purely literary criteria are not enough for the understanding of the story which is recorded in the O.T. " Myth means nothing other than the report by ardent enthusiasts of that which has befallen them." The literature of Israel was not created in the study, be it the study of prophet or of priest, but in what can be rightly called the Church, the sphere where the life of the Community was confronted by its Faith.

The second occurs in the last chapter, where Buber leads the tragedy of Israel's history back to Moses himself. Moses had united in himself the secular and the religious leadership. But before his death he had to separate these, making Joshua " judge " and Eleazar " priest ". From that division derived, Buber says, " the great refrain of Israel's history: prophet versus king " (p. 63). For the two authorities were dealing with the same body of people. But it was tragedy not only for Israel, but for Moses himself. In separating judgeship and priesthood " Moses does something, for the sake of maintaining the work, as a consequence of which a central part of the foundation of his work is broken down. The final scene in the tragedy of Moses, like those which had preceded it, derives from the resistance of the human material. Moses wished for an entire, undivided human life, as the right answer to the Divine revelation. But splitting up is the historical way of mankind, and the unsplit persons cannot do anything more than raise man to a higher level on which he may hereafter follow his course, as long as he is bound by the law of his history." Such sentences remind the O.T. critic that the deepest level of his work is theological.

D. M. G. Stalker

Paul and Rabbinic Judaism. Some Rabbinic Elements in Pauline Theology. By W. D. Davies, M.A., B.D. S.P.C.K. 27s. 6d.

In estimating the value of this notable book by the recently appointed Professor of New Testament Studies at the United Independent College, Bradford, the reviewer must have regard to the carefully circumscribed nature and scope of the author's purpose. It is not Mr. Davies' intention to suggest that Hellenism did not contribute to the shaping of St. Paul's exposition of the Christian faith—indeed the conditions of the first century render it impossible, even in Palestine, to rule out Hellenistic influences as a factor in religious thought—but to show that in all essentials the sub-structure of St. Paul's theology is Jewish. Over against Joseph Klausner and other exponents of Judaism who hold that St. Paul's was an unbalanced soul, torn and divided between Pharisaic Judaism and Diaspora Hellenism, Mr. Davies contends that the apostle stood in the main stream of first-century Judaism and derived from the latter many ideas ordinarily labelled as Hellenistic.

In working out this thesis the author has drawn upon a rich and varied store of Jewish and Rabbinical learning acquired at first hand. The result is not merely to establish the solidity of his general position but at innumerable points, by ploughing down to the sub-soil of St. Paul's inherited ideas, to enlarge and illumine our whole understanding of the apostle. In Chapters I and II, where he takes issue with the sentimentalised version of first-century Palestinian Judaism put forward by C. G. Montefiore and others, Mr. Davies has no difficulty in showing that Montefiore's Judaism is a false abstraction, and that the ground for assigning St. Paul's pre-Christian pessimism, his mysticism, and his dualism of flesh and spirit, not to Palestinian Rabbinic, but to an inferior contaminated type of Diaspora religion, disappears when account is taken of Jewish apocalyptic literature—the type of thought expressed in the Apocalypse of Baruch, IV Ezra, and elsewhere—and of certain strains in the Rabbinic tradition itself. In particular Mr. Davies contends that St. Paul's distinction of flesh and spirit and his radical association of the flesh with sin derive neither from Greek dualism nor from the Hebrew scriptures, but are rather " the complex product of Paul's Old Testament background and his Rabbinic training ". The Rabbinic doctrine of the *yetzer ha-ra'* is the real ground of St. Paul's ideology at this point—his " mind of the flesh " is practically a translation of *yetzer ha-ra'*—and when this is taken in conjunction with the Rabbinic teaching that in the Age to come the Evil Impulse would be destroyed, we have a firm Palestinian basis for the Christian

teaching developed in Romans 7 and 8. Hellenistic ideas afford no comparable basis.

The method which Professor Davies follows throughout the work is to take the great Pauline categories—the New Humanity in Christ, the New Israel, the New Man, the New Torah, the New Obedience, the New Hope—and to exhibit their relation to the older categories of Judaism. It was fundamental for St. Paul that with the resurrection of Christ the New Creation, the Age to Come, had become present fact. From this standpoint the leap of thought to Christ as the Second Adam was natural and ultimately almost inevitable. Mr. Davies thinks that, while the idea of the Christian dispensation as the New Creation was pre-Pauline, the conception of Christ as the Second Adam is due to St. Paul himself but rests, apart from the apostle's profounder sense of the radical nature of sin and guilt, on the Rabbinical teaching with regard to Adam. The Pauline doctrine of the new life " in Christ " was not shaped by Hellenistic mysticism but is the Christian counterpart to the Jewish idea of the solidarity of the race in Adam (Chapter III).

So, over against the Old Israel under the Torah, there arises the New Israel, the Church, under Christ the life-giving Spirit. The Church is the People of God in its eschatological manifestation (Chapter IV). In entering into the Church by baptism the individual appropriates and makes his own the death, the resurrection, and the glorified life of Jesus. He enters into Christ by first re-enacting in himself the supreme facts of redemption and then going on to obedience to the Spirit and to the Law of Christ. What led St. Paul to put forward this mystical interpretation of baptism as a dying and rising with Christ? Not any construction based on Greek mystery-religion. The analogy which St. Paul himself cites is Israel's experience in passing through the Red Sea and from there to Sinai. The mysticism, if we choose so to call it, is Rabbinical, not Hellenistic. The Christian is one who in Christ has undergone a New Exodus, and has stood at the foot of a New Sinai, where not Moses but Jesus speaks (Chapters V-VI).

It is not possible to review in further detail a book which is everywhere suggestive and informing and nowhere more so than in Chapters VII-X which deal with the Person of Christ, the Obedience of Christ, Christ as life-giving Spirit, and the Last Things. Not all readers of these chapters will follow Mr. Davies in his idea that Christ was for St. Paul " the New Torah ", and that it was on Rabbinical teaching with regard to the eternity of the Torah and its instrumentality at Creation that St. Paul built his doctrine of the cosmological significance of Christ. There was nothing to prevent the apostle saying " For He is our Nomos ", if he thought of Christ

in that way, but he has not done so. Nor will everyone be convinced that the conception of " Justification by Faith " is so peripheral to the Pauline system of thought as Mr. Davies avers. Nevertheless the reading of this work provides not merely an introduction to, but a sound education in Paulinism. It is a book which must at once take a central place in the student's, and especially the research-student's library. The author is to be congratulated on a fine piece of work which will have enduring value.

W. Manson

New Forms of the Old Faith. By the Very Rev. James Black, D.D. (Baird Lectures for 1946-47); *Parish and Parish Church.* By the Very Rev. P. D. Thomson, D.D. (Baird Lectures for 1935). Nelson. Each 12s. 6d.

The first named book, with brevity, lucidity and humour, passes in review before the reader a typical collection of the strange systems of belief that claim the allegiance of the gullible and the credulous. It further offers him good ground and reason for thinking twice before committing himself to systems which in a warped pathological way exercise a fascination that becomes fatal to those not equipped with argument with which to resist them.

The author ingenuously disclaims any pretensions to have carried out the kind of " special study " which, he supposes, " professors, or folk of that sort " have time and opportunity to lavish on lecture themes. And certainly such thorough study is not what we have here. What we do have is good, hearty, bluff criticism, sometimes, like bludgeon strokes, revealing vigour rather than accuracy, and sometimes developing something uncommonly like cheapness (pp. 197, 219) when read in cold print, though no doubt as spoken word it easily passed muster and provoked merriment. But after all, this is really just the kind of handling that these queer theories deserve.

The lecturer finds good in all the systems examined. It is affirmed more than once that it is the good of any system that enables it to persist (pp. ix, 199). I suppose this is true, but one might well adopt a more critical attitude, and learn (if only from certain of the parties criticised, p. 235) that it is at the same time the element of good in a bad system that constitutes its danger, and is therefore to be reckoned not a vindication but rather a *casus belli.*

It is arguable that some of the charges brought against the Friends concede too much to them, allowing as they seem to do, that if we were better Christians we should all be more like, or more likely to be, Friends (pp. 124, 128). On the other side, criticism is made of Roman Catholicism for conceding to Spiritualism the

possible presence and influence of spirits, good or bad, at *séances*. But this is to misconstrue the Christian objection to Spiritualism. The Scriptural charge against spiritist dabbling is not that it is false but that it is wrong.

One cannot repress a feeling of deep perplexity and unhappiness that the author of this book should have let it pass into circulation with a title so confusing as that which it bears. It must, one imagines, be most distasteful to the Friends, e.g., to have the near and unwelcome company of Theosophists, Jehovah's Witnesses and Mormons thrust upon them. Why on earth does he allow systems, which, in his own words, the " innate sanity of Christianity " rejects as " pagan and essentially irreligious " (p. 212), to masquerade as " new forms "? The fact is that the book deals with some systems whose chief characteristic is not their novelty, but their falsity or absurdity, and which are in no sense " forms of the old faith " at all. It is a profound pity that hasty and undiscriminating readers should be allowed or even encouraged to maintain or contract the belief, e.g., that Spiritualism is Christianity under a new guise, or that Theosophy is the " faith which was once delivered unto the saints " handed over to us in twentieth century dress.

Like the first, the second named book is excellently produced in a format both pleasant and convenient. Those who have travelled by air will, I imagine, agree that one chief interest of such travel lies in crossing territory already familiar and viewing it now from an unfamiliar angle. This book may put the reader in mind of this; for it selects material that is familiar, for survey from an unusual angle. And, as in flying the view is extensive, so here the material is copious.

There are few people who will not find here a sudden and fresh light thrown unexpectedly on matter from which they might well have thought the last drop of interest had already been squeezed. Here the beadle will be reminded of the venerable character of his office (p. 115); the divinity student seeking licence will have cause to congratulate himself that the process of examination in recent days has been shorn of at least some of its length and much of its rigour (p. 123); and those tempted to " excess in apparel " see reason for satisfaction that the " censure of the Kirk " has been mitigated in the passage of the years.

The influence of the parish and of the parish church is discovered and demonstrated in diverse directions and on levels both trivial and profound. This influence is not least to be noted in matters political. The author commits himself to the affirmation that " democracy is essentially a Christian conception ", and certainly he makes out a strong case for the Church being regarded as the

cradle and seedbed of democracy in this country. The present reviewer is reminded of hearing the late Principal D. S. Cairns speak of a meeting held near his birthplace to demonstrate in favour of an extension of the franchise. High political dignitaries were present who had been sent to test the strength of the country's feeling in the matter. They were plainly told that the position was manifestly ridiculous, in which ordinary citizens were denied a voice in the choice of their governors, when for generations they had exercised control and determination in the much more important matter of choosing their spiritual directors. There is little reason to doubt that, as the author makes out, the election of ministers and officebearers by free vote was both an education in democracy and a discipline in responsibility. In matters charitable, at a time when we see more and more the agencies set up by voluntary charity passing under public and even state control, we may well regret the loss of that " nobler beneficence " which once the hand of the Church alone dispensed.

Though the lectures were delivered in 1935, the book has been brought up to date, and reference is made to the " survey of the Parochial System " presented to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in 1946. Recommendations here made are designed to apply to modern conditions the ancient and altogether indispensable parish system.

It is perhaps a cause of regret that there is such infrequent reference to the no doubt very carefully studied documents—a weakness which a brief bibliography hardly makes good. But the scope and scale of the book precludes any more detailed *apparatus criticus*, and we must be thankful for the convenience and the readability of the volume as it stands.

J. K. S. Reid

Dogmatik im Grundriss. By Karl Barth. Evang. Verlag, Zollikon-Zürich, 1947. pp. 183.

It is quite natural that Barth, with his conception of theology as a function of the Church, should find it congenial to take a Creed or Confession as basis for a theological work, as he did even in the case of his Gifford Lectures, which were based on the Scots Confession of 1560. In the volume now before us he has for the third time used the Apostles' Creed in this way. He did it first in his volume *Credo*, which contained the material of lectures delivered at Utrecht, along with a very important appendix giving the lecturer's answers to questions from a shorthand report. This was published in 1935, and an English translation under the same title was published in

the following year. Secondly, Barth published in 1943 a volume in French entitled *Confession de la Foi de l'Église*, with which the present reviewer cannot claim acquaintance. And now we have this third treatment in *Dogmatik im Grundriss*, containing the lectures he gave in Bonn University in the summer of 1946, when he taught for a semester by special invitation in the Faculty where he had exercised so great an influence in earlier days before the Nazis drove him out. Barth tells us that the situation at Bonn seemed to impose upon him a freer and more direct method than had been his wont, and he departed for the first time in his life from the written word, having his lectures taken down by a stenographer for publication. He apologises for the resultant lack of precision, but apology is quite unnecessary, for the book reads very smoothly, with an impressiveness of its own. In one respect it is an easier book to read than the *Credo* of 1935: it has less of the somewhat rhetorical style, with the use of sarcasm, which sometimes made Barth's earlier writings a little difficult to read and digest. As one reads this new book, one can imagine this world-famous theologian standing amid the ruins of Germany at the rostrum from which he was once driven, and prophesying to a tragic and bewildered generation, and can detect a note of broad and tender human sympathy. It is particularly interesting to find Barth here pleading for the translation of theology into terms that the man in the street can understand in relation to the needs and problems of the contemporary world, such as the question of war guilt. And yet one cannot help wondering whether these very lectures, delivered at Bonn to a mixed audience which included many non-Christians, might not have gone further in translating biblical, confessional, and homiletical speech into something less mystifying for the outsider. Or are we Anglo-Saxons (with our unconventional lay theologians like Dorothy Sayers, whom Barth nevertheless quotes sympathetically) too suspicious of anything like theological jargon, and therefore never quite at home with Continental movements in theology?

Barth does not expect us to find much that is new in this volume, and the treatment generally is very similar to what we had in the *Credo* volume. But there are many interesting details, e.g. the theological importance which is attached to antisemitism and the whole Jewish problem, or the deprecation of the idea of an invisible Church in distinction from the visible, with the hint that nowadays in theology there is rather too much talk about the Church than too little. Barth wishes that Luther's term *Gemeinde*, which is nearer the meaning of *ecclesia*, had won the day, though he seems to be less definite than he was in *Credo* in connecting the Teutonic word

Kirche, church, etymologically with the Latin *circa*, circus, etc., instead of with the Greek *kyriake*, as has usually been done.

To turn to broader aspects: it is always interesting to try to understand Barth's "eschatological" scheme. In this volume there may seem at first sight to be very little eschatology, for the last two phrases of the Creed, "the resurrection of the flesh and the life everlasting", taken together, are given only about three pages. That is partly because Barth's lecture-hours were limited and he had unfortunately to hurry through the later stages, but it is partly because in a very important sense the whole of Barth's theology is eschatological. In the early days of this century the "thorough-going eschatologism" of Johannes Weiss and Albert Schweitzer in the realm of Gospel interpretation was a kind of scandal, but since then it has overflowed its banks and watered all the land, so that almost everywhere theology has in new ways blossomed into eschatology; we may think not only of the Barthian movement on the Continent, but of the work of Karl Heim (*Jesus der Weltvollender*), Paul Althaus (*Die letzen Dinge*), and Oscar Cullmann (*Christus und die Zeit*), not to speak of the "realised eschatology" of C. H. Dodd in this country. In the *Credo* volume Barth worked out a kind of temporal scheme in which the truly revelatory period of "sacred history" was the period of the resurrection of Christ and the forty days that separated it from the ascension. Before it there came the (mainly) non-miraculous period of His life and passion, with its veiling of His glory; and after the ascension came the equally non-miraculous period in which we live, the period of the indirect rule of Christ through His Church, pending the final revelation of His glory at the *parousia*. One cannot but feel that this scheme gives to the forty days a fixity and determinative significance which can hardly be justified from the New Testament, where the relation of resurrection to ascension is much more fluid. The scheme does not appear so prominently in the new volume now before us, but there is no substantial change. Does this scheme, with its conception of the Church as belonging to the present interim period, this "time between the times", which is "the time of the Church", enable us to do full justice to the Christian doctrine of the Church? And how is this scheme related to Dodd's "realised eschatology"? Would it be accurate to say that while according to Dodd's version of the *kerygma* the new age was ushered in by Christ and we Christians are living in it, according to Barth's version there was only a temporary dawn of the new age, withdrawn again at the ascension, so that we Christians are not now living in it, except "dialectically", as we wait for the final consummation? Or do both Barth and Dodd agree in saying

(as Cullmann also says) that in this present age we Christians are like an army whose decisive battle has been won and whose war is really over, though sporadic fighting still goes on? A clarification of these points of comparison is much to be desired.

Closely connected with this is another matter which in the earlier work has troubled the present reviewer: the conception of miracles in the sacred history as *signs* or pointers to the underlying mystery. In the *Credo* volume Barth makes the distinction of the *res* and the *signum*, or the mystery and the miracle, and applies it first in dealing with the virgin birth. The essential underlying mystery is the Incarnation itself, God becoming man; but God has also given us a sign, a miracle, to point us to the mystery; and the signpost is the virgin birth. The same distinction is used in connexion with the resurrection. The essential mystery there is God's victory over sin and death in Christ, a victory which was equally present, though concealed, even in the crucifixion; so that Easter adds nothing in substance to Good Friday, but it adds the *miracle* of the empty tomb and the appearances, and this is the *sign* which was needed to point men to the *mystery*, to *reveal* the concealed victory. The *Credo* volume hints at a similar interpretation of the ascension and of Pentecost. In the new volume this conception is not explicit except in the chapter on the virgin birth, where the treatment is very close to what has always seemed to the present reviewer to be one of the most puzzling chapters of the earlier work. On this view the " miraculous " events are strongly emphasised as having their place in Christian dogma, and yet they are given only an *extrinsic* connexion with the Gospel, as " signs "; they are hardly given an intrinsic connexion, as " mighty works " expressing the very essence and power of the Kingdom. As D. S. Cairns would have said, miracles seem here to be treated as seals attached to the charter, but not as part of the *content* of the charter. And thus Barth would confine them to a very short moment of the world's history, to the forty days, with occasional anticipations, while the rest of history is " non-miraculous " and will be until the end. The whole question bristles with difficulties, but if the above is a fair account of Barth's position, would we not by accepting it lose something of the important new insight which the work of D. S. Cairns gave us in this realm?

For a full treatment of eschatology proper, so very briefly treated in this short work, we may have to wait until Barth reaches the later stages of his monumental *Kirchliche Dogmatik*. But it is worth mentioning that here, as in the earlier work, Barth's eschatology most explicitly dissolves fear and dread into hope and joy.

D. M. Baillie

THE BIBLE IN THE CHURCH[1]

by The Rev. A. G. HEBERT

The subject is the Bible, and its relation to the Church. Hence I shall not attempt to deal with the so-called Bible Difficulties, or with the Higher Criticism, or to develop a theory of Inspiration. I must try to give a line about the general interpretation of the Bible, as being God's Book and truly inspired, written in the Church and for the Church's use; and as written by men, because it has been God's method to reveal Himself through men. It was written by men, and tells a story which is real history; therefore we must have thorough critical investigation of the Bible. It is God's Book because it tells the story of God's saving Purpose, worked out in the history of the believing and worshipping People of God, Israel, His chosen nation. Because this story is true, we have nothing to fear from the Higher Criticism. If that Criticism has been at fault, as it often has been, it is because it has often failed to see the record, as it needs to be seen, from the point of view of believing and worshipping Israel.

For the Church is the People of God, God's Israel. As such, it has existed not for some 1900 years only, but for more than 3000 years, since the day when the Lord God redeemed it out of Egypt and made His Covenant with it. Within this Israel Jesus the Messiah was born, and He reconstituted it so that henceforth it might not be limited to one nation only, but might be Catholic, including all nations, and that in Abraham and his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed.

This story the Bible tells. Its books were all written within the Israel of God; and they can be rightly understood only in relation to the Tradition of its faith and worship and way of life, that Tradition of the believing and worshipping community which has continuously existed for more than 3000 years, and within which we ourselves live. The latest critical book which I have read speaks of the first fifteen chapters of Exodus, which describe the Call of Moses, the Plagues of Egypt, the Passover and the Exodus, as having been written for recital

[1] A paper read at the Anglo-Catholic Congress, 6th July 1948.

at the annual Passover festival; and it is probable that the Tradition of the solemn reading of the Passion-narrative at the Eucharist during Holy Week goes back to a date earlier than the writing down of our canonical gospel.

Perhaps the clearest way to exhibit the continuity of the Tradition of the Faith in its historical development is to set out three confessions of faith, dating respectively from the middle period of the monarchy, about 850 B.C., from the Exile, about 550 B.C., and from the Apostolic Age, about 50 A.D.

The first of these confessions of faith, dating from the time of Elijah, will run somewhat thus: " We believe in the Lord our God, who redeemed us out of Egypt, made His Covenant with us at Horeb, and brought us into the Promised Land. Now we are His People; His Presence dwells in our midst on the Sacred Ark at Jerusalem; and for the future we pray that we may live in peace under His protection."

After Elijah came Amos and Hosea, Isaiah and Micah, Deuteronomy and Jeremiah. The work of the prophets was to convict Israel of sin, and to interpret the danger to the national independence which arose from the militaristic empire of Assyria as the sign of God's judgment on His people. Because the Lord was the real God, because He cared about His People, therefore He must and would chastise them for their iniquities. Isaiah said that only a Remnant would survive the chastisement, but that through this Remnant God's purpose of salvation would go forward.

These terrible warnings were fulfilled. In 722 B.C. Samaria was taken and its people deported; 140 years later a like fate befell Jerusalem. Under this utterly crushing blow, what were the people of God to say? Was it that their God had tried in vain to save them, but had been overpowered? We may remember that this was what Rabshakeh said to them at the time of Sennacherib's invasion: " Hath any of the gods of the nations delivered their people out of my hand? ": it was vain to hope that the Lord would be able to save Jerusalem. But no, they could not say this; for the prophets had proclaimed for generations past that He Himself was sending the invader against them to chastise them for their sins. The prophets' word had been most terribly verified; they must accept His just sentence, and repent.

And repent they did; and repenting, they were able to hear the voices of the prophets telling them that He who had smitten was able to save. His Purpose with them was not finished. Now we come to our second confession of faith, as it might have been made by one who had learnt from Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Second Isaiah. It will run thus: " The Lord did indeed redeem us out of Egypt, make His Covenant with us, and bring us into that good land. We sinned so fearfully against Him that we have had to suffer a fearful punishment. But now we look for a Second Exodus, when He will again redeem us, not out of Egypt, but ' out of the north country and from all the countries whither I had driven them '; a New Covenant, when His law will be written in our hearts and we shall all truly know Him, and our sins and iniquities He will remember no more; an outpouring of His Spirit, that we may keep His commandments and do them; the return of His Presence to abide in our midst in the restored Temple; and the coming in of all nations to share in these blessings, in this coming Day of the Lord when His Glory shall be revealed."

Clearly they expected that this Day of the Lord would come soon. Jeremiah had spoken of " seventy years "; and we know that about 520 B.C. Haggai and Zechariah were urging the rebuilding of the Temple, that it might be ready against His coming. But God is never in a hurry; and we, with the history before us, can see that His time was not yet come; He had much yet to do with His People. They must go under the discipline of the Law; there must be the punctual and devout offering of sacrifice in the Second Temple; there must be in every city and town the synagogues where the people heard the Scriptures read till they knew them by heart, praised God in the psalms, and were trained up in a way of life ordered and disciplined according to God's Law. There came the Maccabean persecutions, in which their faithfulness was tried even unto death, and there were hundreds, perhaps thousands, of martyrs. But still the promised Day did not dawn.

At last there were seen in Israel people whose faces were radiant with joy, announcing that it had happened: Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for He hath visited and redeemed His People. Now we come to our third confession of faith, by an Apostle of Jesus: " Yes, God did of old redeem Israel out of

Egypt, and give them the Mosaic Covenant; and He did send the prophets to make in His Name the promises of His future salvation. Now the time is fulfilled and the promised Reign of God has arrived. Jesus the Messiah has come, has been crucified, is risen from the dead; this is the promised redemption, not from Egypt, nor from the lands of the exile, but from the power of the last enemy of men, from the devil, sin and death. The New Covenant is now ratified by His self-offering in sacrifice for sin, and the eucharistic chalice is His Blood of the Covenant. The promised Spirit has been poured out at Pentecost. The Presence of the Lord has returned, for the Word was made flesh and tabernacled among us and we beheld His Glory; and the Tabernacle where He dwells is no mere temple of stones and timber, made with hands, but is built of living stones: we ourselves are the Temple. And the Gentiles are now being baptized into the Israel of God; in the New Israel there is neither Jew nor Greek, for we are all One Man in Christ Jesus."

So then, this is where we now are. We are the heirs of this great Tradition of believing and worshipping. Our Creed is simply the message of the fulfilment of the Messianic promises, translated into terms of a baptismal confession of faith: faith in God the Maker of heaven and earth, in His Son Jesus the Messiah, in the Holy Ghost. When we confess our faith in the Holy Ghost, we are not merely saying that He is the author of our religious experience; we are saying that God's Purpose for mankind which is recorded in the Bible history, has reached its fulfilment, and we are sharers in its benefits. A Christian is one who has received the Spirit who came at Pentecost. To know what it means to be a Christian, it is necessary to know the story which the Bible relates.

Therefore the Church in its liturgy continually reads and refers to the Bible story. In the Church's use of the Bible we can distinguish three main points. First, we have there the historical record of the mighty acts of God in history, whereby we have been redeemed. Second, we are there taught the fundamental truths about God and His presence with His people and His saving activity in the lives of men and women. Third, we have there presented to us the mystery of Christ, in which the Bible reaches its consummation.

First then, the Bible contains the historical evidence of the acts of God in history, both in the redemption of Israel from Egypt, and in the second redemption through our Lord's death and resurrection. On the truth of these events the very existence of the Israel of God depends. The prophets spoke their message to recall the people to the Covenant; if there had been no Exodus from Egypt and no Covenant, and no revelation of God except that which came in the prophets' own religious experience, that would have knocked the bottom out of all their preaching. Equally fundamental is it to our faith that our Lord really was the Son of God come down from heaven, and that after He had been crucified God raised Him from the dead. If those things are not true, then as St. Paul says our faith is vain and we are yet in our sins; there is no Gospel left, if our Lord was only a religious reformer. That, incidentally, is why we must have the Higher Criticism. The truth of the events of the Redemption must be rigorously tested by every method of historical science. If we were not allowed to do this, we should be refused the opportunity of proving that the gospel narratives are not a tissue of legends.

This point is important because multitudes in our day think of the Christmas story, for instance, as a myth, beautiful but quite unreal; and they are encouraged in this by books such as that of Bishop Barnes which make a pretentious but quite unreal claim to genuine scholarship. The claim of the Christian Gospel is that the Son of God was made man, true man, and lived an actual life in our world. It was in a civilisation like our own that He was hounded to death and triumphed through death, as His martyrs have done after Him. It is our actual human life that has been redeemed to God.

Second: We have before us in the Scriptures the fundamental truths about God, as He made Himself known to Israel His People. They interpret to us God's purpose for the lives of ordinary men and women and His dealings with them. And here, I think, the Bible is of especial importance for us. As practical people, anxious to see the Church treated seriously, and to secure an intelligent and responsible attitude towards membership in it, we often tend to lay the emphasis on " holding the Catholic Faith ", meaning by that a firm assent to the truths concerning Himself which God has revealed, and on the

importance of a Catholic discipline of life, of the precepts of our religion which we obey, and of the Catholic religion as a series of observances which we practise. All this is right and good and important. But there is a certain danger of leaving the Bible out, or rather perhaps of taking it for granted, taking it as read, taking it as if it constituted merely the title-deeds of a religion which we practise. For in the Bible we are confronted with God's own personal action. In the New Testament, it shows us the personal coming of the Son of God into the world and into our lives; the Christ who comes to us in the holy Sacrament is the same Christ who is presented in the Gospel at the Eucharist, doing His works of healing and speaking words which are there addressed personally to us. In the Epistles, we are confronted with the personal action of God the Holy Ghost, for the Epistles describe what happens when the love of God is shed abroad in human hearts through the Holy Ghost who has been given. No less in the Old Testament God is shown throughout as living and active: as wroth with His people when they fall away from Him; as raising up judges to save them; as sending the prophets and giving them His word. The matchless stories, such as those about Abraham or Joseph, which were originally written for the edification of the people of Israel, and on which the People of God have been brought up from that day to this, all tell of His presence and His action in the lives of men.

The Bible history is all related from this point of view. The books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel and Kings are headed in a Hebrew Bible " the earlier prophets ". For these are prophetic books; they do not, like the books written by modern historians, endeavour simply to determine the actual course of events and the causes and consequences of the events, but try rather to see the history from the point of view of God's action in it and His judgment upon it. Thus the record of David's life (which seems to have been written very soon after the events and to depict them for the most part very accurately) is very different indeed from modern journalism. After David has taken Bathsheba to be his wife, having caused Uriah the Hittite to become a casualty in battle, we read: " But the thing that David had done displeased the Lord ". Similarly a long note is added in the Second Book of Kings, after the account of the

Fall of Samaria, to explain that this terrible event happened as God's judgment on His people for deserting Him and going after other gods. Thus as we read and ponder this history we find that we are there given a key to the understanding of all history. It should move us to think of our own contemporary history also as a story in which the same pattern of judgment and salvation through judgment is being unfolded.

Similarly the Psalmists refer everything to God. In the situations in life with which they are confronted they try to see what God is doing, often in great perplexity. They plead for His help; glorify Him in His mighty acts; adore His majesty; confess their sins. Therefore the Psalms always have been and always will be the pattern of Christian devotion, not only as regards personal piety, but also in the endeavour to find and follow the way of God's will in all the circumstances of life. The Church has used the Psalter as the prayer of the many members of the Body, speaking to God in and through Christ the Head.

This brings me to my third point: that the centre of the Bible, the meeting-point of the two testaments, is Jesus the Messiah in whom the messianic promises made through the prophets were all fulfilled. Therefore, when at the great festivals the mysteries of the Faith are set before us in order in the Church's liturgy, at each of them the appropriate Old Testament texts are read to us: at Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Passiontide, Easter, Ascension, Pentecost. The Old Testament lessons which are then read, and the proper psalms which are then recited, unfold to us the richness and fulness of the messianic hope of that Day of the Lord to which the prophets looked forward; and they are read in order that we may understand what it was that happened when Jesus came. God's Purpose for Israel His People was then made complete; the Day of the Lord arrived.

The Church lives in that Day of the Lord. The Messiah came in judgment, exposing evil as evil, laying bare the sin of the publicans and prostitutes, and the greater sin of the self-righteous Pharisees. He bore it all Himself, as the Servant of the Lord who bore our griefs and carried our sorrows, and when all we like sheep had gone astray, the Lord laid on Him the iniquity of us all. He gave His life as a ransom for many. In

His resurrection He has seen of the travail of His soul and has been satisfied.

The Day of the Lord came in that central hour of the world's history when He rose from the dead victorious. Therefore the Paschal celebration, year by year, is the central act of the Church's life. Then we all stand before the Cross of the Messiah as sinners, sharers in the guilt of murdering Him; and because in that Day of the Lord His love triumphed over man's sin, we are raised to life by Him who died for us.

Here is the central point in which the whole meaning of the Bible is gathered up. The Law and Prophets are fulfilled. As the Prophets taught, what God really wanted was not an animal victim, but that sacrifice of the broken and contrite heart which is exhibited in God's sacrificial Lamb who takes away the sin of the world. And the law finds its right place in a Christian rule of life accepted and obeyed in a spirit of humility.

Such is the fulfilment of the Old Testament Day of the Lord; such is the mystery which is re-enacted when we celebrate the Eucharist and receive the sacrament of Christ's Sacrifice. The Cross and the Empty Tomb stand at that central point of history; and their meaning is diversely exhibited in manifold radiance by the wonderful texts from psalm and prophecy, words of apostles and sayings of the Lord Himself, which the Church gives us to use in the liturgy. There the Biblical texts come alive again; there they are for us to use, and go back to them, and find ever new meanings in them.

For the Bible is the Book of the Israel of God, written within the tradition of the believing and worshipping community. God's servants wrote the words, according to what God gave them to see. The writers were men, limited in understanding, liable to sin; yet their minds were directed towards God, and they sought to discern and interpret the working out of His Purpose. In Jesus that Purpose is fulfilled. We live now in the Church, with the Bible in our hands, in the interim period between His First and Second Advents, looking for the completion of our glorious hope.

THE DOCTRINE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

The Work of the Holy Spirit in the World and the Church

by The Rev. Professor G. JOHNSTON

(*An earlier article on "The Nature of the Holy Spirit" appeared in Vol.* 1, *No.* 1, *of the* Journal)

I

In its classical expression Christianity means a new life which God makes available for all who become apprentices of His Son Jesus Christ. Now sinful men cannot unaided appropriate the blessings of that life. Besides the message of the Prodigal who "came to himself" the Gospel exhibits in the Cross divine love that has entered the far country and suffers the ordeal inevitably imposed there by human sin. Really to hear the Gospel is to respond in penitent love to the God who was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself. But how shall men hear unless there be preachers? The Gospel by God's gracious provision is brought to each new generation by those who enter into the apostolic tradition; apostolic, because in history we depend upon those who were the first eye-witnesses of Jesus and His resurrection. Nevertheless the apostles preached under the authority of the Holy Spirit who testifies to Christ and proceeds from the eternal life of the Father and the Son (see John 14.26; 15.26 f.). Paul the apostle preached in the power of the Spirit (Rom. 15.19; 1 Cor. 2.4); it was God who had given apostles to the Church, inspiring them with wisdom and knowledge (1 Cor. 12.8, 28). We find similar testimony in Eph. 3.5 (a revelation disclosed to the apostles and prophets by the Spirit); 1 Pet. 1.12, which links preaching and inspiration; and Acts where we read of men filled with the Spirit, like Stephen and Philip, going out as evangelists. Had not power from on high descended so that disciples should become witnesses to Christ, beginning at Jerusalem? (Acts 1.8). Thus one aspect of the Spirit's office is to appeal, through chosen agents, to the mind and heart of mankind by setting forth the truth of the Gospel. The apostolic society with the Holy Spirit bears witness to the

saving facts of the Christian revelation (Acts 5.32). The promise of Jesus has been fulfilled (John 15.26; 16.13 f.).

John makes this even more explicit. In one of the five sayings in the Upper Room the work of the Spirit as the other Paraclete is related directly to the world. For Johannine thought the " world " lies under the dominion of Antichrist; it is the pagan civilisation of humanity. Yet God so loved this world that He gave His only Son for its rescue. . . The saying to which I refer is in John 16.7-11: the Spirit will convict the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. How is this to be accomplished? It will be done for the world in much the same way as it was done for Israel by the prophets. The Spirit will take possession of all believers and speak through them: sometimes through specially endowed men, prophets and teachers; but also through the Christian community as a whole (I assume here that John 19.22 f. applies to the Church and not only to the original disciples). Thus the Spirit will testify that:

(*a*) Christ died for sins according to the Scriptures of the Old Testament, as Paul says in 1 Cor. 15.3, and that those who deny Him are guilty before God. The message of the Church means to be this word of the Spirit (cf. Mr. Hendry's article in the first number of this *Journal*, p. 40). The world should expect to hear from the Church such witness as " the Son of God . . . loved me, and gave himself up for me " (Gal. 2.20) and " Christ loved the Church and gave himself up for it " (Eph. 5.25); moreover Christ " is the expiation . . . for the sins of the whole world ", for " the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world " (1 John, 2.2; 4.14). Repentance and discipleship follow whenever men of the world recognise in this message the voice of the Spirit.

(*b*) In respect to righteousness: that God's moral order is seen in Christ by whom all things were made (John 1.3; Col. 1.15-17); the death of Christ reveals self-sacrificial love at the heart of this order which is both just and gracious (Rom. 1.18; 5.8); resurrection is the divine affirmation that this is true to ultimate Reality and Christ has become a life-giving Spirit (1 Cor. 15.45). In Christ is begun on earth a reign of grace with a righteousness that issues here and now in a life that is eternal and everlasting (Rom. 5.21).

(*c*) In respect to judgment: that the passion and victory of

Christ mean the doom of sin and every principality of evil, for man may now enter the brotherhood of the Last Adam and the creation may look forward to final restoration (Rom. 5.12 ff.; 8.1-4, 14-22; Col. 2.14 f.). The hour of judgment has already dawned, says the Fourth Gospel: for light has come to expose and to vitalise; men sign the warrants of their destiny by their reaction (John 3.19; 5.25-30; 8.12; 9.39). The parallelism with Mark 3.29 is instructive. God's Spirit continually puts to the world the question whether in Jesus Christ is to be found the goodness, truth and love of God; that is, whether Jesus is a tool of the devil or a man full of the divine Spirit and uniquely God's Son. On its answer hang the issues of life and death.

II

If that be so, the activity of the Holy Spirit must be regulative for Christian disciples. In the New Testament the work of the Spirit is in fact to create a community of love that enjoys newness of life. This single society is the Church. We may illustrate this point briefly from several angles of vision.

Consider faith in God through Jesus Christ, which is the first step into the new life (Rom. 10.9): " No one," writes Paul, " is speaking in the Spirit of God when he cries ' Cursed be Jesus ' and no one can say ' Jesus is Lord ' except in the Holy Spirit " (1 Cor. 12.3). The Christian confession, it would seem, comes sometimes as an ecstatic cry; but almost certainly the Apostle would have ascribed all acknowledgment of Jesus as Lord (*Kyrios*) to divine inspiration (cf. 1 Cor. 2.5; but faith is itself the condition for receiving the spiritual gifts that enable a man to grow into the image of Christ: Gal. 3.2, 4.6, 5.6-25, etc.). At 1 Cor. 12.9 faith is called a gift of the Spirit, perhaps in the sense of an heroic quality, the faith that removes mountains. What all this means may be put as follows: when men and women come into that personal relationship with Christ which is compounded of intelligent belief and loving trust, it is the result of the Spirit within them speaking through conscience, moving them to the love of Christ with everything that involves for their attitude to God and their fellow-men. Faith is no merely passive state; but it is the gift of divine grace in the sense that men cannot receive the offer of new, forgiven life, cannot therefore become the children of God and brethren of Jesus,

unless God call them, except God send His Son to deal with sin. Through evangelists, through experience of life, through Scripture the appeal of the Spirit comes home. Everyone who is within the family of faith understands what is intended by these halting words.

Or take baptism, which for the early Church was a tremendous act of public confession and so a radical break with the past: " In one Spirit are we all baptized into one body " (1 Cor. 12.13). The water is the symbol but also the appointed medium by which men are regenerated and renewed by the Spirit (Titus 3.5; cf. E. F. Scott in the Moffatt Commentary *ad loc.*). In the Pauline theology baptism meant an experience of " crucifixion and resurrection " after the pattern of Christ in whose name the sacrament was performed: converts are " raised " with Christ according to their faith in the God who raised up Jesus (Rom. 6.3 ff.). Hence their real life is above (Col. 2.12; 3.14); their citizenship is in heaven (Phil. 3.20). But in Romans this is explained in terms of the Spirit: " you are not in the flesh . . . the Spirit is life . . . if the Spirit of Him that raised up Christ from the dead dwell in you . . ." (Rom. 8.9-11). With this we may compare the Johannine version of the same experience: " What is born of the flesh is flesh: what is born of the Spirit is spirit . . . you must be born from above " (John 3.3-8).

That is to say, membership in the Church is governed by this gift of the Spirit through faith and baptism; and it is not assumed that any members lack the blessing. (Some sources in Acts require also the confirmation of the laying on of hands. On the relation of the endowment of the Spirit to the sacrament of baptism, Acts is very confused. It may be that later practice has influenced the book in its present form.)

It is not to be inferred that the part of the Spirit in conversion and church membership implies the loss of human freedom. Galatians is full of the idea that the Spirit is given to those who believe the Gospel, but it is also the epistle of Christian freedom. The Truth, as John would say, sets men free. The Spirit of Truth liberates them for no life of legal conformity to a code but for a life as God's sons and daughters with real moral responsibility.

The New Testament often describes churchmen as saints.

They have been set apart for the service of the one holy God (note the puritanism of 2 Cor. 6.14-7.1). St. Paul calls Christians " pneumatics ", spiritual people. To be united to the Lord Christ is to become one Spirit with Him (1 Cor. 6.17): he is not thinking of identification or absorption into Christ's nature; he means rather that the believer is " married " to Christ and what is to grow is, as in a true human marriage, a new and complex personality. Humanity is a vast structure of inter-related folk, in the order of Creation " made of one blood ". Similarly the new humanity in the God-Man Christ (the order of Redemption) is " made of one Spirit ", though still clothed upon with mortality and bound to appear before the judgment seat of Christ (2 Cor. 5.4-7). In other words, the Spirit is not simply an " influence " but actually the life-energy of the divine family.

The marriage symbol is part of Israel's tradition and we find it in Ephesians applied to the Church catholic (Eph. 5.25-32). It appears elsewhere in Paul and, in a slightly different form, in the last book of the Canon (Rev. 21.2, 9; 22.17).

When the Church is considered as a Shrine, the place of the Spirit is not forgotten. Thus 1 Cor. 3.16 should be construed in the light of the whole Pauline system; to the same effect Eph. 2.19-22. This is the Temple not made with hands of which our Lord spoke before His condemnation (Mark 14.58; cf. John 2.21); the sacred area where men worship in Spirit and in truth (John 4.23). It is not for the Jew alone; nor the Samaritan; Gentile and Jew belong here together in the Father's house which is a place of prayer for all nations (Mark 11.17; Heb. 3.6, 6.4; cf. 1 Tim. 3.15). A notable example occurs in 1 Pet. 2.5 where the Church is a " spiritual house " in which a holy priesthood of all the faithful offers spiritual sacrifices. Dr. Newton Flew comments here that " the dominant sense of the word ' spiritual ' in the New Testament is ' God-given ', or ' partaking of the Spirit of God ', the divine Spirit ". The reference therefore is " to the Spirit who has set the *Ecclesia* apart, as the holy People of God to offer up sacrifices of thanksgiving in the Spirit. The Spirit is the creative principle in the *Ecclesia* " (*Jesus and His Church*, 222 f.).

If we look at the conception of the Body of Christ, we shall find exactly the same significant place assigned to the work of

the Spirit in creating and sustaining the Church. For example, Rom. 12 (*The Body is one and has many members*) should be read closely with Rom. 8 which is rich in the thought of the indwelling, enabling Spirit. 1 Cor. 12 (*The Body is one and so is Christ*) is marked by the same characteristics. Each member has a gift of the Spirit for the common good of the Church. The Ministry is the servant of the Spirit and to be honoured as such. But love like Christ's is the exemplar for the whole Body . . . and love is the greatest fruit of the Holy Spirit. This has consequences for the Order of the Church and for Christian Unity which need careful thinking through in our day.

III

For the N.T. as a whole, then, the Church is the community which has entered into newness of life through faith in the God revealed in Christ and it has the Spirit as its Guide and Protector. Not that the Spirit can safeguard it from harm or heresy or infidelity, for it is possible to quench or vex the Spirit (1 Thess. 5.19; Eph. 4.30). Why should this be? it has been asked. Why should the doctrine of the Spirit receive little stress at certain epochs of Western Christianity and early enthusiasm die down? Surely the answer must be that the Spirit is essentially Godlike and Christlike? He is loving, gentle and patient as the Father is; He is humble as Christ is, and does not magically override human failings. "In proportion as we really believe in the presence of the Holy Spirit with the Church which is His body, we shall see the history of the Church as the Spirit's *Via Dolorosa*" (H. Wheeler Robinson, *The Christian Experience of the Holy Spirit*, p. 151). And yet it is a real new life that has come into history in the Church and its continued existence is the proof of the real power of the Spirit within. We may say the same of the expansion of the last century and a half across the world.

The Church of the Spirit may be called a vast corporate Personality living in unbroken continuity from the first Pentecost and in a quickening accord with the company of Heaven. Indeed there are strains in New Testament thought which justify the view that this Church is in true communion with the faithful People of God in Israel; and it may be argued further that the work of the Spirit should not be exclusively confined to

the visible forms of the churches. But in that case we ought also to insist that the New Testament implies that the Christian is the genuine human society (cf. Gal. 3.28; Rom. 5.12-19; Eph. 1.10-14). Worship is the characteristic business of this Church and is to be presented by the Spirit of God (Phil. 3.3; Rom. 8.26 f.; 1 Cor. 14.14 ff.—where Paul is concerned to warn his converts against a false emphasis on the ecstatic elements in possession by the Spirit). So will it be in truth, that is, with an awareness of the divine reality; for it is not possible to behold the reality of the Father in His Son except in the community which is filled with the Holy Spirit of God (cf. Matt. 16.17; 1 John 4.12-14).

Within the limits of this introductory sketch it is essential that one should draw attention at least to the profound thought of the Johannine literature regarding the fellowship of the Church, standing in the apostolic tradition, with the Father and the Son through the Spirit given to it (1 John 1.3; 3.24; 4.13; John 17.17; 14.16 f.). Stringent spiritual conditions are laid down for the enjoyment of this communion; the forgiveness of sin, orthodox belief in the Incarnate Son, and obedience to the law of love (1 John *passim*).

IV

One other point should be mentioned.

It is surely an inspiring thing that whenever a statement of doctrine is introduced in the N.T., there nearly always follows an ethical injunction. The practical necessities of the churchman's life in the world are constantly in the foreground. And this is true of the doctrine before us. Our freedom in the Spirit is freedom to do anything so long as we love God. Each branch in the Vine is to be fruitful or it will be cast out (John 15). "As we live by the Spirit, let us be guided by the Spirit" (Gal. 5.25); the Spirit brings hope, joy, peace and the love of God (Rom. 5.5, 15.13; cf. 14.17, 15.30). Because God has loved us to the length of the Cross we ought to love Him . . . but this means the love of our fellows (1 John 3.10, 16; 4.7-12, 19-21; with Rom. 12.10 and 13.8-10) and a harvest of virtues such as gentleness, good temper and self-control (Gal. 5.22 f.). No one can hope to achieve this in its perfection, but we may pray for growth into the maturity of it in sharing the vitality which ener-

gises the whole Body of Christ (Eph. 4.13-16). Bishop Cockin has pointed out that " the plain man is very conscious of not having very much of what he hears called ' the mystical sense ': but he knows such things as love, patience, kindliness, trustworthiness, gentleness, self-control, when he sees them; and he would give a good deal for a power which enabled him to make them more of a reality in his own character " (*The Holy Spirit and the Church*, p. 90). We ought, therefore to pray to the Spirit for His aid in the new life and one would fain see in the liturgies more direct invocation of the Holy Spirit.

If the Church is the community of the Spirit, it is the most distinctive society in history; for it is the Family of God on earth upon which the Spirit of the Son, Jesus Christ, is outpoured. The Spirit makes real in the here and now the presence of the living Saviour; and He continually impels the believing people to new ventures of understanding and of missionary witness. Of His grace He chooses to work in a special way through the men and women who confess Jesus Christ as Lord and serve the Father made known in Him (and if women are in fact His chosen, the Church has simply to accept them with joy as His ministers). In an age like ours is it not of particular significance that Isaiah 11, now interpreted as fulfilled in Jesus Christ, is the passage commonly made the basis of the prayer for the admission of men and women to first Communion? We may extend it to meet the needs of the whole Church.

MISSIONARY COMMUNICATION[1]

by The Rev. WILLIAM LILLIE

I

WHAT has the missionary to communicate? It is primarily "the given Word, the essential and unvarying Gospel", the *kerygma*, "the kind of speech which is likely to draw men into the Christian community" as contrasted with "the kind which is required for the further instruction of those already within it". Professor John Baillie in his Whitby paper gives from the New Testament accounts of our Lord's own *kerygma*,[2] and those of St. Peter[3] and St. Paul.[4] From these it is evident that the Christian *kerygma* has two parts; on the one hand, there is a statement of events that have happened or are about to happen, events that we may call "the mighty acts of God"; on the other hand, there is a call to repentance and faith; part is in the indicative and part is in the imperative mood. The only adequate way of stating facts and of giving commands is for human beings the spoken or written word, and the emphasis at Whitby on the Gospel being proclaimed by *life* does not alter the fact that it is "by the foolishness of preaching" as a general rule that it has pleased God "to save them that believe". Dr. Van Dusen has most clearly expressed what may be called the Whitby view: "The Word is principally to be communicated —not through ideas, or even speech but through life . . . Preaching, theology, the Word spoken, the Word formulated, are not to be undervalued. But in the authentic Christian witness, these are always secondary not primary media of communication." In one way preaching is surely a primary medium of communication; for human living, even at its most Christian heights, can never explicitly declare the primary facts to be communicated, that God became man and that the God-man died and rose again, in the way that preaching declares them.

Dr. Van Dusen has also defined for us the content of the *kerygma*, or as he calls it "essential Christian faith". It is

[1] *The Witness of a Revolutionary Church*—Statements issued by the Committee of the International Missionary Council, Whitby, Ontario, Canada, 5th July 1947, and Whitby Papers in *The International Review of Missions*, Vol. XXXVI, No. 144, October 1947.

[2] Mark 1.15. [3] Acts 2.14-39. [4] 1 Cor. 5.1-3.

" the faith of the first Christians *not* seen through the eyes of any subsequent period and interpreted in its favourite concepts and categories, but as it appears in the pages of the New Testament ". If this be " the only practicable guiding principle for Christian missions ", it is in some measure an unattainable one. In the writings of St. Paul and of the St. John of the Fourth Gospel and the Epistles, the Christian faith is already in varying measure seen through the eyes and interpreted in the categories of Greek thought. To many theologians, St. Paul seems to communicate the primordial Christian Faith more adequately when he uses the concepts and categories of Greek thought than when he uses those of Jewish Rabbinic thought. Nor is it clear that the " domestication of Christian truth in the vocabulary, and in harmony with the presuppositions, of Greek thought involved the abrogation of authentic Christian belief in deference to the abstract metaphysical categories of the Greek mind ", as Dr. Van Dusen dogmatically affirms. Is it not possible that this domestication took place in the providence of God as a stage in the Holy Spirit's guiding Christ's disciples into all truth? Similarly, when " Christian apologetic faced a revived and regnant Aristotelianism and sought to rearticulate Christian truth in terms of its presuppositions and categories ", it is not unreasonable to suppose that these presuppositions and categories were more adequate for the expression of the Christian Faith. The fact that the Moslem theologians with an Eastern rather than a European cultural background found the same Aristotelian concepts and categories adequate for the expression of their faith does suggest that these may be concepts and categories of universal reason rather than of local use. The Christian Churches of India and China have not so far discovered forms of thought to take their place. It is true that it is in the New Testament that the " essential Christian Faith " is to be found, but this can be believed on other grounds than those set forth by Dr. Van Dusen. We have in the New Testament the only adequate authentic records of the facts of the *kerygma*; the interpretations recorded in it are those of " eye-witnesses and ministers of the Word "; and their insight into the spiritual realities of the recorded events is good ground for holding the old-fashioned view that they were inspired by the Holy Spirit of God in a unique way.

Professor Baillie's statement that the apostolic *kerygma* is " from beginning to end a recital of *events* " or actual happenings may be contrasted with a view that is commonly, if not very explicitly, held in missionary circles to-day that, where Christian men live Christian lives in a heathen environment, Christianity will as it were spread of itself. A European lecturer in a government college in India once put it in this way: " I always thought that religion was infectious, something like the measles "; and there appears to be the hope underlying the Whitby emphasis on Christian living that this view is true. But the Gospel is not primarily or solely an atmosphere or ethos or influence that spreads itself unconsciously; it consists of *facts* that have to be believed and acted on, if God is to do His work in men's hearts. There is indeed something mysterious, unseen by human eye in the communication of the Word; it is (to echo Professor Baillie's words) not only history, nineteen hundred or more years ago, but each receptive heart that is invaded by a Presence of a new kind, a Presence that " dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father full of grace and truth ". It is the impact of Christ Himself upon men's souls that brings about conversion. Here again there has been much loose thinking in the Christian enterprise. We have talked glibly about presenting Christ to our hearers. But human speech can never actually present Christ; that is the work of the Holy Spirit alone, whose mission it is to glorify Christ in men's hearts. To use Archbishop Temple's terms as quoted by Professor Baillie, we may offer in our preaching truths concerning Christ, " propositions which express the results of correct thinking " concerning Him; we cannot offer to men's apprehension Christ Himself. The preacher tells the acts that God wrought through Jesus Christ; he may even try to describe the character or personality of Him who lived in Palestine in the first century, although the reticence of Scripture writers in this matter warns him how short a way he can go in this direction. But he can never bring men to that confrontation with the living Christ that in some form or other is present in every Christian conversion, although the converted man does not always recognise it as such. Human preaching has in the providence of God often been the prelude to this encounter; indeed for a full experience of conversion the converted man must

know that it is the Christ who died and rose again that is dealing with him, and it is through some form of preaching only that he can learn these historical facts. There is a picture distributed by Roman Catholic missionaries, of which simple village Christians in the Punjab are very fond. It is a very crude picture of the Sacred Heart of Christ, in which the conventional figure of Jesus has, as it were, a door opened in His body to show His bleeding heart. It may be that one reason for the attractive power of this picture is that it conveys something which many more winsome and charming portraits of Him fail to convey; it proclaims the *fact* (in what many may feel a coarse and repellent way) that Christ bled and died to save men; it is a form of preaching. Yet preaching never can ensure that the encounter with Christ will take place.

Besides the communication of facts there is in preaching the exhortation or command to men to repent and to put their trust in the things that have happened and will happen. The call to repentance, except in terms so general as to be quite ineffective, is perhaps the most difficult part of the preaching of the Word for a foreign missionary to undertake. People are apt to resent a foreigner attempting to convince them of sin, particularly when, as was the case until recently with British missions in India, the foreigner belonged to a race that had conquered and occupied their country. Once in a class of Punjabi Christian students, I spoke on the commonness of bribery and dishonesty in India and tried to show how these notorious evils were due to individual selfishness and greed, and I aroused in some of my hearers a bitter antagonism springing from wounded national pride, which probably hindered the communication of any " good news " to these students for quite a considerable time. Of course there is an offence in the Gospel that may anywhere arouse antagonism in the natural, proud heart of man, but the foreigner is liable to cause an unnecessary addition to that offence. Be that as it may, the *kerygma* is not simply " good news "; it is also a call to men to change their hearts —sometimes a hard thing to proclaim and always a hard thing to perform.

It has been the policy of certain " Faith missionaries " to preach the *kerygma* in its essentials, and then to move to another area, leaving the work of further instruction to the Holy Spirit.

Normally, however, the proclamation of the *kerygma* is followed, as it was in apostolic times, by the *didache* or subsequent instruction. There can be no hard and fast line between *kerygma* and *didache*; it is the experience of evangelists that parts of Scripture, which would obviously be classed as *didache* rather than *kerygma*, the Epistle to the Hebrews for example, are used through the preaching of the Word to open the way for the meeting with Christ. In the special circumstances of the Mission field, the task of the missionary includes not only the elementary instruction of believers; it embraces also the *sophiä* or *gnosis* or *mysterion*, in which theology is included by Professor Baillie. For it is one of the early tasks of a missionary to train as preachers of the Word converts, who by virtue of their superior knowledge of their own mother-tongue and their sharing of a common national heritage with their hearers, are likely to be by far more successful evangelists than the foreign missionary. Such evangelists need some knowledge of theology; otherwise they are likely to err in the content of their message and to fail to communicate that of which they themselves have little comprehension. It is in view of this need that leaders of the younger Churches in the East in recent years have been very insistent that theological teaching and the more general training of the ministry are undertakings in which they still need the help of the Churches in the West, either by way of Western teachers coming as missionaries to the theological seminaries of the younger Churches, or by way of our theological Colleges in the West receiving African and Asiatic students. There is an even more compelling reason why theology should form part of the message to be communicated by missionaries to-day, but we shall refer to that after we have considered generally the relevancy of the Word to our time.

II

At Whitby, Principal Moses made his first point that "the Word should be articulated in all its challenging relevance to the plight of man to-day". It is a common exhortation to preachers to bid them see that their message is relevant to the needs of their hearers, and, if in the mission field the preaching of the Word has no relation to the hearer's interests, it will either not be listened to at all or be listened to as an enter-

taining display of elocution that has nothing to do with the hearer. Yet we must be very careful to distinguish here, as Bishop Neill did at Whitby, between what men need and what men desire. "The secular revelation", said Bishop Neill, "succeeds by offering people what they want; that is just what the Church can never offer. Its loyalty to God involves complete identification with the needs of men, and complete aloofness from their desires." Attention to Bishop Neill's distinction might have saved the compilers of *The Witness of a Revolutionary Church* from making the ambiguous statement: "The Kingdom of God made real in Christ is far more satisfying than the kingdom of men devoutly believed in and proclaimed by the Communist." The truth of this statement obviously depends on the meaning given to the word "satisfying"; for, so long as the majority of men desire bread and circuses more than they desire "righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost", the Communist kingdom will seem more immediately satisfying to men than the Kingdom of God. It is the heart-breaking experience of every foreign missionary and probably of most evangelists working in their own country that most people are not conscious of their need of a Saviour, and for such people to discover that the Kingdom of God is satisfying is a sequel and not a prelude of their accepting Christ. "None but His loved ones know" how completely He satisfies human need.

The basic human need, which the Christian Gospel satisfies, is, as Scripture writers and evangelists have always preached, the need of salvation from sin with its consequent reconciliation of man to God. Christ Himself proclaimed that He was come not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance, and the apostolic witness is unanimous that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. However the range of human aspiration which Christ alone can satisfy may be extended, the need of salvation from sin must remain the central part of it. The most desperate plight of man is that he is a sinner, separated by his sin from God, and his sin is indeed his chief handicap in obtaining the satisfaction of all his worthy aspirations. Men are so conscious to-day that something is wrong with the world and at the same time so unconscious of their own sin that a part of the Christian *kerygma* to-day would appear to be just the demonstration that the world's plight is in large measure the

consequence of individual human sin, not merely the sins of the Nazis or the Communists or the former British rulers of India or any other convenient scapegoat, but the sins of the preacher and the hearer of the Word. To bring home to the consciences of men the evils of to-day, as our Lord tried to bring home the real (as contrasted with the conventional) sins of His own age to the consciences of scribes and Pharisees is one of the preacher's most perilous tasks. The foreign missionary has, as we have already suggested, special handicaps in this matter, but it is a task which no preacher can escape.

To-day, however, there is a recognition that Christ not only delivers men from their sins, but is relevant to all human activities. In one way, of course, deliverance from sin and reconciliation with God are in themselves the biggest factors in making every human activity be what it should. The creative power of our artists, the fellowship of our citizens and of our nations, and the daily work men do to earn their living would be worthier and more satisfying if human sin were removed. But the present-day recognition is of something more than this; we hold now that not merely *qua* sinner but, for example, *qua* creative artist, a man in Christ is a new creature with a new creative power. For such a man, the words of the hymn are literally true:

> Heaven above is softer blue,
> Earth around is sweeter green;
> Something lives in every hue,
> Christless eyes have never seen.

A rich contribution has been made to Western theology by Russian thinkers in their recognition of the relevancy of Christ to all human activities. M. Zernov in his study *Three Russian Prophets* declares it to be the duty of the members of the Church to " show to the rest of mankind the example of love and respect for the earth and explain the true goal of technical progress ". The relevance of Christ to community which is recognised in the place of " fellowships " in the life of our Churches to-day, was emphasised by Russian thinkers like Khomiakov, and, when Professor Macmurray finds the very core of religion in our fellowship with one another,[1] he is certainly influenced by

[1] " The field of religion is the whole field of common experience organised in relation to the central fact of personal relationship." Macmurray: *The Structure of Religious Experience.*

Russian thought. M. Berdyaev again has shown how Christ is relevant to a creativeness in general and in particular to a creative morality, which escapes " the intolerable dullness of virtue ".[1] Christ is certainly relevant to all human activities but such relevance is always secondary to the relevance to man's need of salvation from sin. Christ Himself while announcing the salvation of sinners through Himself had nothing of that obsession with human sin that some evangelical preachers have displayed. He was obviously concerned with the healing of the body as well as the saving of the soul; He gave much time to the teaching of a creative and adventurous morality (surely a salutary example to those theologians who belittle Christian ethics); and almost all His parables speak of the activities of the common man, and indirectly of the relevance of religion to activities that can be so used as patterns of Heavenly truth.

In view of this Divine example, no missionary need hesitate to attempt to catch his hearer's ear by speaking of any of the many-sided human activities to which the Christian evangel is relevant. During my twenty-four years in India, I cannot remember of any recent convert to Christianity telling me that he had been led to Christ in the first instance through a consciousness of his own sinfulness and his need of a Saviour; in many cases such an experience came later, and it may be that it is an experience of what may be called a second stage in the Christian life, when a fuller knowledge of Christ reveals to the believer his own sinfulness. (It may have been thus with St. Peter, for his cry, " Depart from me; for I am a sinful man ", probably came a considerable time after his becoming a disciple of Christ through the communication of his brother St. Andrew). At the Sialkot Convention in the Punjab, a convention modelled on the well-known Keswick Convention, the penitent sinner was often met with, but this is a convention of professing Christians. In studies that have been made of the first steps towards conversion in India,[2] the variety of reasons given by converts for their first becoming interested in the Christian Faith is extraordinary, and in the case of many of the more conventional reasons given, it may be suspected that later Christian experience has been read back into the first approach.

[1] In his *The Destiny of Man.*
[2] As in J. W. Pickett's *Christian Mass Movements in India,* p. 163.

There is one form of the relevance of Christianity to human need that was more than once referred to at Whitby. A theology or a metaphysics is needed in the lands of the younger Churches to save civilisation from collapse under the stresses of the present age. Dr. Chao from China spoke very clearly on this: " To-day Chinese life is shaken to its very foundations. Its philosophy, ethics, religion, art, language and everything else are falling to pieces. The whole of China seems to be suspended in the air. China is therefore in dire need of a faith. She is vaguely aware that, while she is not deeply interested in metaphysics, *she is actually crying out for a metaphysical foundation, for a new faith.*"[1] Principal Moses spoke similarly of his countrymen in India: " Their inherited faith seems to be helpless in the content of this confusion. It has no light to shed; on the contrary, it makes confusion worse confounded by its airy theory of the world being just a *maya* or illusion. . . Here is a realm of real need, where the given Word can be lifted up to shed its strengthening light." One may add that even a superficial acquaintance with the state of Western scientific thought suggests that this science is also, in Dr. Chao's words, " crying out for a metaphysical foundation, for a new faith "; indeed one of the hopeful signs of our own rather bleak age is the recognition of the relevance of Christian theology by a number of leading physicists. Without such a metaphysical foundation, our vaunted scientific progress seems to lead only to a series of economic crises and an uneasy competition in destructive armaments. A Christian metaphysics is admittedly part of the Christian *sophia* and not of the Christian *kerygma*, but of its relevance to the contemporary situation in all civilisations there can be no doubt.

III

So far we have been considering communication by the spoken or written word, but the speakers at Whitby seem to have been of one mind that (to repeat words already quoted from Dr. Van Dusen), " the Word is principally to be communicated . . . through life ". Most speakers realised that the preaching of the Word must accompany and indeed form part of our communication through life, but there is the suggestion

[1] Italics mine.

more than once that it is the living that makes the preaching effective. Dr. Chao was as definite as Dr. Van Dusen: "Can men and women speak without imparting themselves in actual examples of self-denial and self-sacrifice, when they speak for God, who lived and also died in His only begotten Son? . . . The Word, in short, is not communicated merely in speech; it must be given in life, in actual living." Principal Moses did not lay quite so much stress on individual example, but his view was generally the same: "The Word that became flesh at a point of time in history needs to become flesh and dwell in contemporary man, so that he too may be able to see its glory." Bishop Neill said in a similar strain: "The Church does not exist to care for the sorrows of the poor and oppressed, but unless it does care for them, and takes the lead in caring for them, no amount of preaching will convince the world that the Church is the authentic body of Christ." And in *The Witness of a Revolutionary Church* we are told: "The power of the Gospel is little felt unless it is proclaimed by life as well as by word. . . When the action of the Church is inspired by the example of Christ and His indwelling power, men have to take notice of it, and it arouses either their devotion or their bitter opposition. Mere preaching, without the quality of Christian living, is not evangelism in the sense in which the proclamation of the Gospel was understood by those to whom it was committed."

In all these statements there is an implicit suggestion of a very common, but very unchristian type of argument that a man's preaching is effective in proportion to his goodness of life, and that the preaching of the Word is made effectual unto salvation by some virtue in him that proclaims it. Fortunately there is nothing either in Scripture teaching or in missionary experience to support this suggestion. Most missionaries who from the human angle appear to have been most successful in winning men for Christ would categorically deny that anything Christlike in their lives has been the cause of the triumph of their message; and who can deny that even in the saintliest preachers of the word there have been human weaknesses that repelled as well as human excellencies that attracted? "We have this treasure in earthen vessels that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." Here are two examples

of how the Word may be communicated through very unworthy instruments. The great mass movement of the Chuhra tribe in the Punjab began with a Hindu convert called Nathu bringing to an American missionary a Chuhra called Ditt whom Nathu had instructed. This is the historian's estimate of Nathu: " Nathu, a Hindu of the Jat caste, son of a prosperous landlord and lambardar (village headman) was converted, but disappointed the great expectations the missionaries had for him. He squandered his property and forfeited his position as prospective lambardar in succession to his father. *In every sense he proved a weak brother.*"[1] Yet this Nathu was the instrument of communication which brought into being a Church of more than a hundred thousand people. In the last twenty years, a time when there have been very few converts from Hinduism and Islam in North India, one of the most successful evangelists in the Punjab has been a worker in a Christian bookroom. Of this man's zeal and devotion there is no doubt, but most people who have known him regard him as a man with a twisted nature, constantly engaged in intrigue and a trouble-maker in his own congregation. This is not the kind of man that might be expected to commend the Gospel by his life and yet, as far as human eye can see, he has been more successful than most in communicating the Gospel.

The lack of importance of the life of the human vehicle in many cases of communication is further indicated by the fact that converts in India sometimes deny, as St. Paul tended to do, that they were influenced by any human agent at all. Bishop Pickett in his investigation of the Christian movement among the middle classes in the Andhra country writes: " We were impressed by the frequency with which new converts, when asked who had influenced them to become Christians, replied that no man had influenced them, but that they were moved directly by the Spirit of God. . . A money-lender engaged in oppressing Christians, determined to destroy the Church, experiences a change of heart as a result of a dream, and declares his Christian faith the next day. A woman, believed to be dying, rallies and declares that she has been allowed to return to life that she may be converted, and win her relations and neighbours. A landlord, arising in the middle of the night

[1] Italics mine.

and seeing a beam fall upon and smash the bed on which he had been sleeping, decides that he was awakened that he might have another chance to be converted. A school teacher, after opposing Christianity for twelve years, dreams three nights in succession that his father returns to life and tells him to follow Christ.[1] Bishop Pickett goes on to point out the marked ethical change in each of these converts as evidence of the genuineness of their conversion. We may well believe that the lives of human instruments did play a part, unknown to the convert, in each of these cases, but they do remind us of the secondary place of the human instrument and his life in actual cases of conversion.

Is it to be considered then that the life of the preacher is wholly irrelevant to communication? Ordinary sinful men, and still more the saints of God, do show in their lives fleeting and imperfect reflections of the character of their Lord and Master, and these too may be used as preludes to that personal contact with Christ, which is at the centre of every Christian conversion. Indeed, we may go further, for some in the experience of being forgiven by a human being, have in that experience itself come into real contact with the forgiveness of Christ; the encounter that was outwardly between human beings was in reality a confronting of Christ. Again preaching itself is not mere speaking; it is an " existential " activity in which the preacher's whole being is involved. For our good news song may seem to be a more adequate medium of communication than speech, for we have, in the words of a Communist song, " what it takes to make songs of ".[2] The great preacher may have the same message to deliver, even the same words as the hireling, but in his preaching there is something that comes from his long Christian experience and his life of communion with God. In a metaphor from music, his fundamental note may be one that he shares with other preachers; but he brings to his preaching a rich array of overtones which give fullness and depth to his message, and perhaps by the grace of God a greater effectiveness in reaching human souls.

Yet it would be altogether wrong to try to make any correlation between the saintliness of a preacher and his effective-

[1] Pickett: *Christ's Way to India's Heart*, p. 137.
[2] Quoted by Dr. J. A. Mackay in his recent Croall Lectures.

ness in bringing men to Christ. Our Lord Himself with His sinless human life seems to have influenced effectively only a few of the many thousands who must have heard Him speak, and never man spake like Him. In the great ingatherings that followed the day of Pentecost it was not the lives of St. Peter and St. John that made St. Peter's preaching so effective; it was the working of the Holy Spirit. St. Paul could even rejoice when some " preach Christ even of envy and strife ", for he believed that, " whether in pretence or truth Christ is preached ", the preaching might be effective through the work of the Spirit.

IV

In their emphasis on communication by living, the Whitby speakers may have been thinking not so much of the personal lives of the preachers as of what may be called their " life and work "—the many activities that missionaries carry on in the name of Christ, and particularly the healing of the sick in Christian hospitals, and the teaching of the ignorant in Christian schools and colleges. How are these activities, which actually form such a large part of the Church's missionary programme, to be related to the communication of the Word? It is well-known that, sometimes deliberately, sometimes accidentally, missionaries have used these activities as means for gathering audiences for the preaching of the Word, and for disposing these audiences to a more ready attention. The crowds that come for healing to a Mission Hospital, or the well-disciplined classes of a mission school are more attentive and more lasting audiences than the casual listeners at a street-corner or a village well, and the Christian atmosphere of the institution brings them into a state of mind, in which they are more likely to be responsive than they otherwise would be. Yet this aspect of the mission institution has been much criticised both by missionaries themselves and by national leaders. Many of India's non-Christian leaders admit that they like the spirit of self-sacrifice and service manifested in Christian hospitals and schools and that India needs such institutions, but they hold that to use these institutions as a means of gathering audiences for what they call religious propaganda is neither morally justifiable nor true to the spirit of our Christian Faith. If the sole

aim of such institutions were to increase the number of Christians, as such critics imagine, then this criticism would be in some measure just. In many cases, such institutions may have been founded simply from the Christian desire to meet human need. In any case, if the missionary knows that his patient will never be well in body, mind and soul without surrendering his heart to Christ, and that his pupil will, without a saving knowledge of Christ, have missed the most fundamental truth about the universe and that which is the keystone of the fabric of knowledge, it is surely the case that the preaching of the Word is an essential part of the healing or teaching work of the mission institution.

A distinction may be made between the *expressive* and the *effective* activities of a Christian.[1] The Christian does many things simply because, being a Christian, he cannot help doing them; they are expressions of his Christian faith and love, and, ideally, the whole life of the Christian consists of such activities; he does all to the glory of God. But many, if not all, of his activities may be looked at from another angle; they are activities with a certain end or result in view, and they are only worth doing if they produce that result. The preaching of the Word is effective, when its sequel is that vital encounter with Christ which we call conversion. The teaching in a mission school is effective in so far as it gives the pupil true education (opinion will differ as to whether this includes conversion). The healing in a mission hospital is effective in so far as the patient is cured (this too may be held to imply conversion). The primary relation of these activities to communication is, however, not a matter of effectiveness at all. As a part of the missionary programme they are expressive rather than effective activities. They will never in themselves without preaching tell a man that Christ died for him. To put it in its simplest terms, when a missionary sees a sick man, Christ's love in his heart prompts the missionary to heal the man; and, in doing so he manifests Christ's love and glorifies God. What then is the missionary communicating in hospital and school? Not the mighty acts of God wrought for man's salvation, for these must be preached. But he is communicating the fact that

[1] This is not exactly Dr. Brunner's distinction between demonstrative and effective action. *The Divine Imperative*, pp. 236, 237.

Christ is relevant for other aspects of man's nature than his sinfulness, relevant in particular for the health of his whole being and for his quest after truth. We realise this kind of communication in other spheres; no one thinks of the Christian artist and the Christian poet as primarily evangelists, for, if they are simply preaching sermons, their painting and poetry are likely to suffer; yet who would deny the reality of their communication? Nor can we deny that the Christlike activities of doctor or teacher or artist or poet may be used by the Spirit, as the Christian activities of any man may be used, to lead men to a decisive encounter with Christ, but these activities are not practised *in order* to bring about this encounter.

There is another way in which communication is constantly taking place in Christian school and Christian hospital; there is, I believe, in them, a direct transmission of the grace of God. The surgeon's hands or the teacher's words are used, as sacramental symbols are used, by the Holy Spirit. The Christian doctor gives, or rather the Spirit gives through him, a spiritual gift as well as physical healing. Many of us in Scotland can recall in our school-days teachers, who perhaps never mentioned Christ or religion once in their classes, and yet from whom we received some of the most precious and Christian influences in our lives. Divine grace certainly came to us through them, but not the *kerygma*, the message of salvation.

V

It is the mission of the Church to set forth Christ openly before the world in action as well as in word, but it is sinful arrogance to imagine that the individual Christian will by his personality or his activities show anything but imperfect reflections of his Lord's personality and activities. This is indeed what we might expect, for in Christian theology the continuation of the incarnation is not, as Dr. Van Dusen suggested at Whitby, individual human lives; it is the Church that is the body of Christ, and it is in the Church that the Word (to use Principal Moses' words) " needs to become flesh and dwell in contemporary man ". The Whitby Statement refers to the " vision of the reality and fullness of the universal Church " vouchsafed to those met at Whitby, and this vision must have been aided by Professor Baillie's emphasis on the *koinonia*, and

Professor Levonian's study of " The Holy Spirit in Fellowship ". There is in the Church what the Russians call *sobornost*, " a spirit in which all work together creatively, and to which all contribute ", and if the Church to-day rediscovers the secret of its fellowship, then in the words of our Lord's own prayer, " the world may believe that Thou has sent me ". Our *koinonia* may become a *kerygma*! A convert from Hinduism said recently that the thing which his Hindu friends find most attractive about Christianity is our social life, and, when we remember how broken and defective our Christian fellowship is, we realise what a mighty power a really complete and worthy fellowship would be in the proclamation of the Gospel. Dr. Freytag at Whitby in speaking both of the war-time Church in Germany and of the German mission in New Guinea laid emphasis on the point that it is the Christian *congregation* living by the Word, which makes the Word articulate to our generation. Our fellowship is primarily an expression of the Love of God in our hearts, but we have our Lord's own prayer as guarantee that it can also be effective in producing belief in His Divine mission.

Dr. Freytag indicated at Whitby another way in which the Church may be the incarnation of the Word in our generation. Throughout the history of the Church, the supreme example of the Christian witness has been the martyr, the witness who suffers and dies for his faith; it is no accident that the Greek word for witness should have added to its Christian connotation the idea of dying for the Faith. Here too we have the authority of Scripture, for it is as Christians share in the fellowship of Christ's sufferings that they have the right to be identified with Him in His glory, and we preach not only Jesus Christ but Him crucified. This has been confirmed by the experience of the Church in recent years in Central Europe and in Manchuria; the suffering congregation has in certain places exercised a more effective witness than the prosperous congregation ever did. The blood of the martyrs is still the seed of the Church.

Another aspect of the life of the Church which is relevant to communication seems hardly to have received the emphasis at Whitby that it deserves; the worship of the Church is a witness to the world, " which both recalls and dramatises the

Christian redemption". A convert from Hinduism once told me that in his opinion it was utterly useless to engage in religious arguments with Hindus, and most missionaries who have attempted to do so, find that the Hindu can apparently accept everything in our creed, and yet accept nothing. Discussion never seems to bring him to the decisive moment of confrontation with Christ. Intellectually he can find room for the most glaring paradoxes of Christian theology without his having any saving knowledge of Christ. This Hindu convert went on to say that if a Christian can bring a Hindu to pray and worship with him, then there is a chance of a true conversion. Worship is so much worth-while in itself, so much the supreme expression of our Christian faith that we may hesitate to suggest that it is also a means of communication. Yet in truly Christian worship, including as it does sermon and sacrament, men may see not only the praise and glory due to Almighty God; they may see also the dramatisation and gracious power of the Christian redemption—the primary word of communication.

NATURAL THEOLOGY AND THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD

by The Rev. GWILYM O. GRIFFITH

I

We understand that if Theology in general means the systematised interpretation of Divine truth, Christian Theology means the systematised interpretation of the redemptive revelation of God in Christ. That is its subject, and its method is the exposition of Holy Scripture. Natural Theology differs from Christian Theology both in subject-matter and in method. Its subject is the revelation of God in Nature and in the world of man, and its method is the exposition of that revelation in the light of human reason and conscience. Of course this is not to say that there cannot be a Christian Natural Theology. That would be to prejudge an issue which is sharply dividing Protestant theological thought on the Continent at the present time and which is the occasion of this paper. But I think that, without prejudging that issue, it can be said that if the exposition of Nature and man's world be made in the light and under the authority of the Christian revelation, then, in a not unimportant sense, Natural Theology loses its distinctive character. For though, in that case, it continue to interrogate Nature and Man, it derives its decisive *answers* from the revelation in Christ, and thus becomes distinctively Christian and Scriptural.

In any case, the term Natural Theology implies that there is in Nature and the world of man, as apart from the revelation in Christ, a disclosure of Divine truth; and it is assumed that the natural man has access to this disclosure through the exercise of reason and conscience. The knowledge that it may afford will not be the knowledge of God in His redeeming grace; yet if a natural knowledge of God be assumed at all, it is something that puts upon the natural man a certain responsibility —the responsibility, namely, of being within reach of such a Divine revelation as must make complete ignorance of God inexcusable.

It follows from all this that the simple question which lies behind the whole controversial subject is the question whether or not God is really knowable to the natural man: or to express it in more theological terms, Does the natural man retain enough of the *imago Dei* to enable him to respond, as from some deep inward correspondence of being, to God and Divine truth—not indeed to respond in the sense of a moral obedience, but in the sense of a moral and intellectual *recognition* of the truth? If here I essay a very inconclusive comment upon this question, it must be understood that I do so not as a theologian but simply as one who is concerned with the impact of theological thought upon the ministry of the Word. And in this connexion one curious fact may be noted at the outset. We are all aware of the long and controversial history that lies behind this general subject of the *imago Dei*; yet for several "theological generations" it has been the habit, I think, of our British evangelical pulpit to assume and teach that all men bear the Divine image, and to do so as if both the doctrine and its implications were so clear, so definite, and so well established as to be taken for granted. How often have Browning's well-known lines clinched an eloquent pulpit passage:

> Take all in a word, the truth in God's breast
> Lies trace for trace upon ours impressed.
> Though He is so bright and we so dim,
> We are made in His image to witness Him.

And so we have had Emerson for the related doctrine of man's ability:

> So nigh to grandeur is our dust,
> So near to God is man,
> When Duty whispers low, *Thou must,*
> The Youth replies, *I can.*

And if occasionally the pulpit trips over the last line, and makes the *Soul* reply "I can", the generally accepted meaning is unchanged. It is Emerson who gives us also the less familiar lines:

> In thousand far-transplanted grafts
> The parent fruit survives;
> So in the new-born millions
> The perfect Adam lives.

(It was Principal Forsyth, I think, who used to warn preachers

and Divinity students against the habit of certifying their didactic and doctrinal passages with apt quotations from the popular poets rather than with an appeal to the witness of Holy Scripture!)

Perhaps, without labouring unduly this matter of our own evangelical preaching, I shall be allowed an illustration. When preparing this paper I picked up a volume of sermons preached mainly in 1899 by the Rev. R. J. Campbell. At that time—long before the " New Theology "—Mr. Campbell's preaching, approved as it was by Fairbairn, extolled by Robertson Nicoll and R. F. Horton, and welcomed by the religious public, was fairly representative of our liberal evangelical pulpit. And in the first sermon I read the following passage:

> It is a fact that the average man nowadays refuses to accept any authority for religious belief unless it conforms to the necessities of his own nature. . . Man, in trusting his own nature to respond to the truth that helps him, is really trusting to the Divine within him. It is not arrogance to do so; it is but the recognition of the fundamental truth that man is made in the image of God.[1]

Here, then, the doctrine of the Divine image in man is applied to certify the prerogative of " the average man " to refuse to accept any religious authority which does not conform to his own intuitions. Now, from young Mr. Campbell in 1899 to the venerable teacher and trainer of preachers, Principal W. B. Selbie, in 1943, is a far cry; but the witness is similar. One of the last articles that Dr. Selbie ever wrote was by way of being an argument from the doctrine of the *imago Dei* as man's present and potent possession, and the doctrine was cited as something that commanded common acceptation (the italics in the quotation are mine).

> . . . as spiritual things are only spiritually discerned . . . [God] *reckons on finding that in men which makes them able to receive and appreciate His grace.* We may agree with the Barthians that this, too, is God's gift, for God has indeed made men in His own image and likeness. *It is this which makes it possible for men to hear His word and to respond.*[2]

I do not raise the question whether or not this way of " agreeing with the Barthians " would win the cordial approbation of Dr. Barth. The point is that Principal Selbie in 1943 was maintaining the same doctrine of the *imago Dei* that Mr. Campbell

[1] *A Faith for To-day*, p. 24. [2] *Christian World*, 8th April 1943.

was preaching in 1899, though the application was more limited. It is assumed as a sort of evangelical truism that the Divine image imprinted in human nature gives us the ability to discern, receive and respond to Divine truth and grace. Or as Mr. Campbell succinctly put it in the sermon already cited:

> The modern Englishman believes that he carries within himself a certain power of testing truth. The venerable Protestant principle of private judgment was based upon a psychological fact of which the nineteenth century knows more than the sixteenth.

It is clear that teaching of this kind, whether well-founded or otherwise, sets Natural Theology on its feet. Man bears the Divine image, by which he discerns and tests for Divine truth. Then certainly he is capable of interrogating Nature and his own world and building up a body of belief in conformity with his own reason and conscience. He may advance " through Nature to God ", with the further possibility of advancing from Natural Theology to the theology of the Christian Faith.

But when we have gone thus far, certain other questions and possibilities arise. After all, can it be claimed that Christian theology itself is infallible? Has not Barth himself, as a Biblical theologian, reminded us that " theology is human, not Divine; it is not the Word but the servant of the Word, and the dogmatical scholar is as little in the secret counsels of God as the exegetical scholar "? And if Christian Theology is not above corrective criticism, is it not conceivable that, now and then, Natural Theology might be used to correct even her more privileged sister? Is it not conceivable that, in some crisis of the race's intellectual and religious history, Natural Theology might even come to the rescue of a traditional Christian Theology and, by re-fashioning it, re-vitalise it? What limits can be set to the possibilities of the human spirit, of human reason and conscience stamped with the image of God, and potent to discern Divine truth and to respond to it? These questions certainly arise and have arisen.

In 1907 the British religious public welcomed the appearance in English translation of Bousset's much discussed lectures on the nature of religion (published under the title *What is Religion?*). So punctual and cordial was the British welcome that a second edition was called for in the same year, and in 1911 a third printing was demanded. It was in his concluding

lecture, on the Future of Christianity, that Bousset was specially impressive, the earlier lectures on tribal religions, national religions, religions of law and religions of redemption finding their proper climax in that prophetic last discourse. What was the outlook? Bousset was not unhopeful of the future of Christianity, if only the movement toward credal freedom and readaptation could be resolutely continued. For indeed (as he pointed out) the Reformation had done much. Luther had " destroyed the final authority of the Church "; he had freed evangelical piety and morality from a mass of external observances; he had " destroyed sacramental religion "; he had effected a complete change in the attitude of Christianity toward the secular world; he had sown " seeds and thoughts which were scarcely recognisable in the original Gospel "; and all this was to the good. Everything now depended upon the continuation of this good beginning.

For the Reformation naturally had its limitations and drawbacks. One of these was the Reformers' Biblical theology, including " the whole of the Christological dogma " and the Pauline-Augustinian soteriology, " entirely animated by the contradiction between sin and grace ". If Christianity was to survive (so the argument proceeded), these limitations and drawbacks must now be cast aside, and theology must come to terms with " the modern ideal of life ". Nor should this be too difficult, though the spirit of the new age was admittedly aggressive. " Enormously self-conscious, with an intense and constant joy in the material concrete side of life, full of varied interests, with both feet firmly planted on the earth, culture cries out to us, ' Behold, I am here!' " The task of Christianity was to give culture living-room by ejecting the furniture of obsolete beliefs and allowing her to re-furnish the vacancy to her taste. Theologians were therefore exhorted in effect to close their Paul and open their Goethe—and their Bismarck. And so, in his prophetic last lecture Bousset contrasted the splendid horizons of the new *Weltanschauung* with the narrowness of a too Pauline and traditional theology, and faced his public with the crucial alternative. Either they must incorporate in their theology " the modern ideal of life " and so revive Christianity for a new era of usefulness, or they must stand by a moribund Faith and witness its demise. For, they

were warned, " if we take from modern life its very essence and force it to self-renunciation, we shall have absolutely to cast aside such complete and great figures as those of Goethe and Bismarck ". And with what result? With the result that a Christianity without its Goethe and Bismarck must perish; for " such a conception cannot any longer be accepted in modern life, with its absolutely independent attitude ".

I make no apology for this exhumation of Bousset. For the point is that he was in effect contending for the rights of Natural Theology, the theology of reason and conscience operating within the sphere of Nature and the world of man—contending for its Christian recognition, and contending too for the right of each generation of men, made in the image of God, to demand that religious Faith, if it is to receive their acceptance, should reflect their own " ideal of life ". Within seven years of Bousset's book the first World War was upon us; and afterwards, in the unquiet interval between the wars, it was possible, as we very well know, to carry Bousset's plea a little further. If Goethe and Bismarck, why not Rosenberg and Hitler? Why not a reconstituted German Church with a reconstituted theology incorporating in still fuller measure the " modern ideal of life "? And this brings us to that aspect of the Natural Theology debate which is dominant in the present controversy on the Continent.

II

In 1946 the belated appearance, in English and in a single volume,[1] of Dr. Emil Brunner's *Nature and Grace* and Dr. Karl Barth's reverberant *No!* (with its " Angry Introduction ") set the terms of the dispute clearly before us. Since the first writing of these brochures in 1934 the case has had much elaboration on both sides, but the little book serves quite competently to set forth the divergences between the two leaders. The debate turns on the question whether or not we have, or ought to have, a true Natural Theology. Brunner affirms that the need for it is exigent; Barth answers, " No ". There is little danger of misunderstanding Barth, but Brunner's argument is not easily summarised and not always easy to follow. Perhaps

[1] *Natural Theology*. With an Introduction by the Very Rev. Professor John Baillie, D.D., D.Litt.

we can best view them both against the background of the Roman Catholic position, which both Brunner and Barth reject.

It must be remembered that Roman Catholic teaching makes a clear distinction between the order of Creation, to which, for example, the State belongs, and the order of Redemption, to which the Church belongs; and this distinction marks a neat demarcation between Nature and Grace, Reason and Faith, Ordinances and Commandments. It is the Natural side of this division that is important for us here, for it affects the question of the *imago Dei*. According to the Roman teaching, man, through sin, has lost his original perfection but not the Divine image. And because he retains it he retains also the power of rational response to the revelation of God in Nature, and the power to co-operate with Divine grace. There is therefore a place in the Roman system for a purely rational, self-sufficient Natural Theology, quite distinct from the theology of the Christian revelation, but able to co-operate with it and provide it with a rational foundation. Brunner, quite as emphatically as Barth, denies this position. Much more does he deny, like Barth, the assumption of the Enlightenment that the light of nature and of reason is sufficient in itself, and that the whole of theology is properly Natural Theology. He categorically agrees with Barth that the original *imago Dei* in man has been destroyed, and that with it has been lost the possibility of even willing to do that which is good in the sight of God. No less categorically does he affirm that, though there is objectively a Divine revelation in Nature, nevertheless it does not exist for the natural man, for sin makes him blind to it. All the same, and in the context of these affirmations and denials, he proceeds to argue that " it is the task of our theological generation to find the way back to a true *theologia naturalis* ". It will be seen that, superficially at any rate, this position is not easy to understand.

Barth on the other hand is easy to follow because his negative is absolute. There are no reservations or complications. Not only does he refuse to recognise Natural Theology, but also he refuses it even the negative recognition of a formulated and detailed rejection. To set up counter-theses against it would be in effect, he argues, to acknowledge it. He is prepared to give it no more recognition than one would accord to a preci-

pice or an abyss into which it is undesirable that one should step. He would recognise it by passing it by. Those of us who remember Dr. Barth's visit to Great Britain before the war recall, it may be, his private criticism of his own *Romans*—that it contained too much Natural Theology! He repeats this self-criticism in his dispute with Brunner. " How could I deny that I, too, have . . . repeatedly practised ' true *theologia naturalis*. . . '? It may be possible to convict me of many atavisms and relapses in this matter, and I am certain that it is not easy to get rid of the demon." But a demon, for Barth, it is and is likely to remain. This is not difficult to understand, though some may find it difficult to appreciate.

It will help us if we bear in mind that this open debate between Barth and Brunner dates from 1934, and that in 1933, the year of Hitler's seizure of power, Barth was the outstanding theological spokesman of those German Protestants who opposed the religious pretensions of the Third Reich. He did so, as we know, in terms of a purely Biblical theology, and his manifesto, *Theological Existence To-day*, dated significantly 25th June 1933, is relevant to the present dispute and will bear quotation (pp. 12, 13):

> Within the Church it is agreed that it is good for man to depend upon the Word of God, and that this is his only good in time and in eternity, to rely upon it with all his heart, all his mind and soul and all his powers. Further, it is the unanimous opinion within the Church that God is never for us in the world . . . except in this His Word, and that this Word has for us no other name and content but Jesus Christ, and that Jesus Christ is never to be found on our behalf but each day afresh in the Holy Scriptures. . . And particularly as preachers and teachers of the Church we are at one in fear, but also in joy, that we are called to serve the Word of God within the Church and in the world by our preaching and teaching.

It was precisely at this critical time, then, that Brunner came out with his declaration that " it is the task of our theological generation to find the way back to a true *theologia naturalis* ", and that Barth replied with his *No!* Precisely at this time when the Third Reich was trying to win over the German Churches and to mix the Faith with Nazi ideology, and when Barth was insisting that the battle must be fought around the Word of God and with a strictly Biblical Theology —precisely then, Brunner was saying that " the " task of that existing generation was to " find the way back " to a true

Natural Theology. We can have no doubt about Brunner's motive. He was every whit as much concerned as Barth to resist a fatal compromise. But his method seemed strange and ill-timed. It still seems so, when one remembers how closely his theological position approached to Barth's, and that he nevertheless chose that particular and critical hour to distract men's minds—as it appeared—from their specific concentration upon a Christ-centred Scriptural Faith to the task of finding a way back to a true Natural Theology. I think we must allow Barth some little degree of heat in his protest, and I do not think we may regard such bitterness as is discoverable in the controversy as a peculiarly Continental-Teutonic characteristic. Some of us are old enough to remember the bitterness of our own " New Theology " disputation (not to mention the " Down Grade " controversy!), when Fairbairn, Forsyth, Nicoll and their opponents did not exactly dip their pens in honey. We remember also the American Fundamentalist debates. Such memories belong to times much more tranquil than the period of the Barth-Brunner dispute, and bitterness was perhaps less excusable. In any case, Barth's ire was not excessive in its immediate expression.

> The reason why I must resist Brunner so decidedly is that I am thinking of the future theology of compromise. . . His essay is an alarm signal. I wish that this new and greater danger were not approaching, or that it had not been Emil Brunner who had crossed my path as an exponent of that danger.[1]

Here again inevitably the dispute turns upon the doctrine of the *imago Dei*. Brunner agrees with Barth that the " material " image of God in man has been destroyed, and with it the moral freedom of man's will; but he argues that the *formal* image of God in man is not lost. What does he mean by the " formal " image? He means that *quod* of personality which constitutes the *humanum* of every man, though he be a sinner—his humanhood, his " person-hood ". For man is " in a derived sense that which God is originally "; he is " subject " and not merely " object ", and in that sense he is a *person*. True, in his sinful state he is " an anti-personal person ", for the truly personal is " existence in love "; nevertheless, in spite of this inward contradiction, a person he remains. This is the " formal " image,

[1] *Natural Theology*, p. 69.

and sin, so far from cancelling it, would itself be impossible without it. The importance of this contention for Brunner is that it allows him to argue for a " natural " point of contact between God and man, this point of contact being the formal *imago Dei*. For if man, by virtue of this, is a being who, in the nature of things, is a *person*, and can therefore " be addressed ", it follows (as Brunner holds) that he can be addressed by God; and if he is a being who, in the nature of things, has a " capacity for speech ", for words, it follows that he has a capacity, to that extent, for the Divine word. Not, indeed, that he has a capacity to *obey* it. This, Brunner agrees, he has not. Salvation is by grace alone. None the less, there is in the natural man a real " point of contact " as between himself and his Maker. What then about " natural revelation "?

Brunner distinguishes between three revelations: first, the revelation of God in creation, second, the revelation of God in Christ, and third, the Beatific Vision. It is with the first, of course, that Brunner's argument deals, and it is not always easy to follow it. The term " natural " in " natural revelation " may be used, he reminds us, in a double sense, " the one objective-divine, the other subjective-human-sinful " (p. 27). Thus, while the term " nature " can be applied to what sinful man in his ignorant knowledge makes of the works of God in creation, it can also be applied to " such permanent capacity for revelation as God has bestowed upon His works, to the traces of His own nature which He has expressed and shown in them ".

> Wherever God does anything, He leaves the imprint of His nature upon what He does. Therefore the creation of the world is at the same time a revelation, a self-communication of God. This statement is not pagan but fundamentally Christian. But nowhere does the Bible give any justification for the view that through the sin of man this perceptibility of God in His works is destroyed, although it is adversely affected. Rather does it say this, that surprisingly enough sin makes man blind for what is visibly set before our eyes (p. 25).

" Surprisingly enough ", but then, as Brunner admits, it does so. Man, according to Brunner—that is, the natural man—is blind. True, the cause of his blindness is in his will, but none are so blind as they who will not see; and Brunner affirms the bondage of man's will. He has not the freedom to *will* to

see. What then becomes, we may ask, of even the objective " capacity for revelation " in Nature? For it takes two to make a revelation, the revealer and the one by whom the revelation is perceived as such. If it cannot be perceived, then it is not " revelation ", even objectively or potentially. And Brunner affirms that, by reason of man's moral incapacity, it cannot be perceived. Therefore to speak of a " permanent capacity for revelation " in Nature seems to be misleading, and to say that the imprint of God's nature is upon all His works does not equate with it. The clay has not a " capacity for revelation " simply because it is plastic under the hand of the sculptor. One might as well say that a blank page has a capacity for poetry, or a capacity to reveal poetry. It has a capacity for ink, for the printed word, but to a population of the blind this communicates nothing, and if revelation is incommunicable it is not revelation. Yet if the argument fails here, the case for natural revelation (and thus for natural theology) as Brunner states it, seems to break down. There is really no communication, no " point of contact ", after all.

Barth fastens upon this inconsistency. He contends that, since Brunner proceeds with his case, it follows that he does not really mean that the natural man is " blind " to the Divine revelation, he means only that man's vision is defective. And there is much in Brunner's language that supports this. " What the natural man knows of God ", says Brunner (p. 33), ". . . and of his own dependence upon God, may be very confused and distorted "; sin " dulls man's sight " (p. 26). And on p. 50 we have, as it seems, an explicit statement that man is not " blind ".

> The whole arrangement of the world, with its fixity and the permanency of its being, is a manifestation of God. It does not bear this function " in itself "—any more than the Scriptures—but only because to this Word [i.e. in Nature] is added an ear that hears it, to this manifestation an eye that sees it.

It is recognised of course that only the Christ-enlightened eye can see it clearly. But granted that man in any measure possesses by nature the seeing eye for Divine things and the hearing ear for the Divine word, then it does appear that Brunner's argument carries him into that disputed region of the " co-ordinating ' and ' " which he, no less than Barth, repudiates—

Grace *and* Nature, Revelation *and* Reason, Commandments *and* Ordinances. " The struggle against this ' and ',' Brunner declares, " is the struggle of Elijah on Mount Carmel against the halting between two opinions " (p. 18): but in this matter it is Barth rather than Brunner who wields Elijah's sword. In any case, Barth challenges Brunner at every point, particularly at the crucial point of the " formal " *imago Dei*. If this means no more than man's humanhood, his " capacity for words ", it means nothing (Barth argues) in the nature of a " point of contact ". For it by no means follows that a " capacity of words " carries with it a capacity for a Divine word. That a man is a man and not a cat or a tortoise by no means implies that he is naturally capable of the knowledge of God. He may know, and does know, the god of this world, " one of those creatures of man's philosophical phantasy, one of those principalities and powers of the world of ideas and demons, which most certainly do exist, and which reveal themselves and are known to us quite concretely "; but this is not the knowledge of the living God. On the other hand,

> if we really do know the true God from His creation without Christ and without the Holy Spirit—if this is so, how can it be said that the *imago* is materially " entirely lost " . . ? Has not Brunner added . . . to what we have been assured is purely " formal " something very material: man's practically proved ability to know God, imperfectly it may be, but nevertheless really, and therefore not without relevance to salvation? . . . But how can Brunner wish to do this? The echo of his audible confession of the Reformers' doctrines . . . [that is, of man's total inability and the sole efficacy of grace and the Scripture revelation] is still sounding in our ears! Then he does not want to do it? But if not, then what *does* he want to do? (p. 85).

It does in fact appear as if Brunner had logically embarrassed his own case by tying it up too closely with the Barthian position —by agreeing with Barth at the outset that the Divine image in man is materially lost and completely so.

III

Here the debate must be left, though the temptation is strong to follow it into the region of the Reformers' teaching, where Brunner has a much stronger case, and where Barth is obliged to admit that " if we really wish to maintain the Reformers' position over against that of Roman Catholicism and

Neo-Protestantism, we are not in a position to-day to repeat the statements of Luther and Calvin without at the same time making them more pointed than they themselves did". But my concern is with the bearing of this controversy upon preaching and the ministry of the Word: and there is space for no more than a summarised comment—a comment which, I repeat, the reader will find sadly inconclusive.

If what has been set down in the first section of this paper points any moral at all, it is that an ambiguous ill-defined or over-stated doctrine of the *imago Dei* may lead easily to many other forms of doctrinal ambiguity, and in the end to a compromised evangel. If the conception of the Divine image passes into the conception of a generally diffused God-consciousness, it may easily pass also into a false identification of the Spirit of the Age with the Holy Ghost, and into the elevation of "modern ideals of life" to an authority that vies with the authority of the Gospel. Changes of this kind do not come catastrophically; they come gradually and almost imperceptibly, as by a process of slow infiltration; but when they come we presently have a Natural Theology which is first the ally and then the supplanter of Christian Theology: and by the same process we pass from being ministers of the Word to being mere "ministers of religion". Under the strict authoritarianism of the Roman Church, there is little danger of this; Natural Theology is under discipline and surveillance, and held within inviolable bounds; but in our Protestant Churches the danger is real enough.

This however is no conclusive argument. It may be that the Faith must needs live dangerously, and "Safety First" may become the motto of theological decadence. Nevertheless Barth's alarm-signal is salutary if it call us back to our distinctive witness. Even to-day our preaching is weak on the dogmatic side. The imperative urgency of the Word is not felt either in the pulpit or in the pew as we could wish it to be felt; and when once this urgency is lost, even though a vague religious earnestness remain, what really is left to us? We do not claim as preachers to be geniuses: we are ordinary men; and, apart from the urgency of the Word, there seems to be no reason why our views on religion should be a matter of interest to the community, week by week. The pressing task of our own theo-

logical generation is that of finding a way back to a true *Biblical* theology: the task of our ministerial generation that of rediscovering the authority of the Word.

But while we may be whole-heartedly with Barth on this issue, there are some of us who cannot follow his specific interpretations. And here again the doctrine of *imago Dei* is crucial. By his total denial of the Divine image in man, Barth has certainly shortened the line, tactically, for a defensive theological position; but are we to take his word for it that this total denial represents the actual truth about man? How are we to know, when Biblical theologians from Augustine to our own day have failed to agree even about what constitutes the Divine image? As Luther says, " there is here agitated a whole sea of questions ": nor are we helped very greatly by having one view dismissed as " Catholic " or " Thomist " and another as " Neo-Protestant ". It may be, indeed, that the Divine Spirit has had no " point of contact " whatsoever with those seekers after God who, from Lao-tse to the noblest of the Stoics, felt after Him if haply they might find Him; it may be that theirs was but the worship of " phantasies " or " demons "; but is it clear that this is the truth? Does revelation make it clear? For this we need more than the personal assurances of even the most eminent of Biblical theologians.

I am aware, of course, of the unsatisfactoriness, perhaps the inconsistency, of these final reflections. I have pointed the danger of a lax and ambiguous doctrine of the Divine image, only to set a question-mark against Barth's definitive doctrine and to lapse into ambiguity. It is well to confess the embarrassment. Perhaps embarrassment in one form or another belongs to our theological existence. But we can all, Brunner included, stand with Barth in the confession that " it is good for man to depend upon the Word of God ", and that " this Word has for us no other name and content but Jesus Christ ". It is precisely here that the controversy, if it exercise us at all, should be salutary. If we are to be ministers of the Word, we must have a Biblical Theology, and if we are to have a Natural Theology also, all the more do we need a ministry that is grounded, stablished and settled in the Christian Revelation.

HOLY MATERIALISM

An Examination of Lüthi's *Die Soziale Frage im Lichte der Bibel*

by DAVID H. C. READ

A Danish friend remarked to me recently that he wished that preachers would stop attacking materialism. I found myself in complete agreement with his thesis that the current pulpit fashion of denouncing the materialism of the age is both muddle-headed and ill-timed. In the first place, it is highly questionable whether the present generation is more " materialist " (using the word in its worst sense) than, let us say, the Victorian era. What is more important, the phrase " materialism of the modern man " on the lips of Churchmen begs more than one question. In what sense is the Christian abstracted from the human material situation? And what is the remedy for materialism supposed to be? An abstract " spiritualism "? A flight from the concrete situation in which we all have to earn a living? If the answer is that by " materialism " the Church to-day means an obsession with *things* with a consequent neglect of spiritual values, we do well to ask whether that is indeed the problem of the modern world, or whether it is not more true that the real battlefield is the sphere of these spiritual values, the ideologies in whose name *things* are controlled.

Walter Lüthi's recent booklet, *Die Soziale Frage im Lichte der Bibel*, is a realistic effort to bring an informed and Reformed insight to bear on the sociological questions of to-day. He will have nothing to do with that non-Christian dualism which seeks to evade responsibility for the human material situation by an other-worldliness which consigns this present cosmos to the devil. The starting-point of all genuinely Christian thought on the relationship of spirit to matter, or rather on the true nature of this complex spirit-matter world, is the Incarnation; and it is here that Lüthi begins his exposition. He is not speaking of Incarnation as an abstract principle an Idea which provides a satisfying interpretation of the material universe. He is referring us to the historical fact to which the Church bears witness, that the Son of God " became man for us men and for our salvation ".

The whole New Testament has, as beginning and end and holy centre, the fact that God Himself has entered into the material through Jesus Christ: " The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us " (St. John 1). The Word is made flesh, actually flesh! The flesh is the place where we human beings set up the strongest opposition to the Spirit, and according to Biblical phrase to the flesh belong our souls with all their forebodings, errors, and declensions. The flesh is the place where we must most obviously succumb to death. The flesh is also the abode of demons. And precisely there, where the world is most intensively world, where the earth is as it were at its most earthy, precisely there is pleased God to enter into our Time and World.

It will be seen that here Lüthi guards himself against the common confusion of " Flesh " and " Material ", recognising that in Pauline terminology to " Flesh " belong the so-called " sins of the spirit "; but he is concerned to stress that the Incarnation involved the most intimate possible concern of God with what is generally known as the material, or physical world. It was flesh and blood that God assumed in Christ, a body like ours. And this concern of God with material conditions Lüthi rightly finds reflected throughout Scripture. He refers us to the petition of the Lord's Prayer: " Give us this day our daily bread ", and deplores the strenuous efforts that have been made to spiritualise it. It has seemed so mean, so material—to ask for actual food. This shyness about the physical demands of men, so characteristic of modern piety, is totally non-Biblical. He contrasts this almost docetic hyper-spirituality with the " holy materialism " of the Bible, in which God does not despise matter but recognises it as His creation. The interesting suggestion is made in passing that this " holy materialism " is illustrated by the instruction to enter, when we pray, into our " closet "—the ταμιεῖον being nothing other than the larder, the only room in such a house with a lock. " Into this, where the air is filled with natural smells and vapours, into this where the empty shelves remind the poor man of his poverty, and where the full shelves remind the rich man of his poor neighbour, into this Jesus sends the one who would pray."

Further illustration of the " holy materialism " of the Bible is abundantly offered in the Old Testament where both the Law and the Prophets are continually concerned with material conditions. " Thus saith the Lord; for three transgressions of Israel, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment

thereof; because they sold the righteous for silver, and the poor for a pair of shoes." A pair of shoes! That is where the Word of God impinges on human life—not in some remote sphere of piety or spiritual seclusion.

In the New Testament Pentecost is a startling example of this Christian materialism. We are accustomed to think of the descent of the Holy Spirit in terms of an inner mystical experience, or of a revelation of a transcendent reality. The average Christian to-day almost necessarily connects the thought of the Holy Spirit with the most non-material aspects of his faith. But Lüthi reminds us that integral to the revelation at Pentecost is its immediate effect: " And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common. And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all. Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them down at the apostles' feet, and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need." (Acts 4).

The fact that the story of Pentecost " begins with the spirit and ends with the flesh " is regulative for our Christian understanding of materialism and the social problems of our generation. It was not a sign of weakness, a declension from the faith, this immediate preoccupation with the distribution of goods. The Holy Spirit moves as it were from the Holy Temple to consecrated homes, and a consecrated society. The " experience of Pentecost " for a Christian ought not to be some inner mystical excitement, but a new consecration of the material world, our daily work, and the social framework of our times.

The movement of the divine Spirit is simultaneously of a double nature. The report says that the Spirit that morning began to move ἄνωθεν, that is, vertically from above. But then the second direction of movement of the divine Spirit became apparent, and this proceeded horizontally, spreading over the earth. . . Precisely because He is the Holy Ghost He aspires towards the unholy earth. . . It is an unusually Biblical statement of Ötinger, when he says: " The end of God's way is bodyliness (earthliness)."

The social problem as such comes into view with the inescapable Biblical corollary of this " Holy Materialism "—God's concern with the material needs of mankind, what Lüthi calls " His struggle against poverty and want ". This emerges most vividly in the Gospels with their emphasis on the healing ministry of Jesus. On re-reading the Gospels recently in a modern translation I was particularly impressed by the space that is given to our Lord's work in combatting and eliminating the evil forces that make for human distress of body and mind, as well as what is popularly known as " spirit ". And we must recognise that the tendency in the Church has been to avoid facing the implications of this aspect of her Lord's work, usually by means of a constant allegorising. (It is deplorable that the Churches of Calvinistic origin have succumbed so readily to the device of allegorisation which was so heavily condemned by Calvin himself.) Lüthi reminds us that the fight against poverty and want is characteristic of Christianity, and that no other world-religion is so committed to a constant campaign against evil social conditions. The excuse that reforms are " impracticable " ought never to be on Christian lips.

The Old Testament contains in the social legislation of the Pentateuch sufficient illustration of this " holy materialism ", this concern of God with the conditions of family and national life. But it is the New Testament that focusses our attention on the specific questions of human social conditions. Put bluntly, God is on the side of the poor and oppressed. " Four times we hear Jesus call blessed the poor, the humble, the hungry, and the oppressed ": there is the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus: the rich can scarcely enter into the Kingdom: the attack on Mammon is constant. All this does not mean that the poor are idealised, nor that the rich are excluded from salvation, but the careful reader of the Bible cannot escape the impression that poverty implies a certain nearness of God, and riches a certain distance. " Beware of Mammon! " Decisive for Christianity is the fact that the Lord Himself chose for His Incarnation the form of poverty, and those who give practical help to the poor and the oppressed " do it unto Me ". We have no right at all to spiritualise the parable of the Last Judgment, or to limit its application to the Christian brethren.

That leads us to the practical question of amelioration.

What is the Christian duty over against the existence of poverty and distress? We have seen that the social problem exists, that we cannot escape confronting it, and that the fight against social evil is God's fight. Lüthi has no hesitation in reminding us of the Biblical answer that is so often misunderstood in the modern world: Almsgiving—by which he means welfare work in the widest sense of the word. It is fashionable to despise the habit of " good works ", the dispensing by the well-to-do of " charity " to their unfortunate brethren, but we do well to remember that there may be more hypocrisy behind the sneer of the cynics than the alms of the rich.

The duty of almsgiving is anchored in Scripture. Lüthi quotes Deuteronomy 24 as a *locus classicus*—the provision for the fatherless and the widow through the rights of gleaning. To-day there are a thousand ways in which the Christian is summoned to provide help for his brethren, and one of the encouraging signs at the moment is the readiness of the response in Christian circles to the demand for succour that has come in recent months from ex-enemy countries.

But the question of alms inevitably involves a consideration of the problem of " private property ". It is often debated whether Christianity allows " private property " or condemns it. Lüthi gives the uncompromising answer that the question cannot really be posed since the concept of " private property " is quite foreign to the Bible. The only one who has any private property is the One " who came unto his own, and his own received Him not ". For the believer everything is loan, lease, entrusted goods. Whatever is not considered as God's property becomes at once a false god. The corresponding Biblical word for our expression " private property " is " Mammon ". Almsgiving then appears in its true light as a token of our recognition that our all belongs to God. It is *pars pro toto*. " When it says in the Law: ' Thou shalt not steal ', that is said of entrusted property which we are not to steal unto ourselves. But ' private property ', in contradistinction to entrusted goods, is according to its origin and nature, an out-and-out heathen conception, which comes not from the Bible but from Roman Law." Lüthi makes the interesting comparison with slavery, which was not just simply done away with when the Gospel was received, but in course of time was undermined and became

impossible. So, he says, it must be with " private property ". It is as foolish to defend the one on Biblical grounds as the other.

However much we emphasise the duty of almsgiving as a symbol of the fact that all property is God's, we cannot be content with it as the sole Christian answer to the social problem. The danger is that almsgiving should be regarded as a substitute for social justice. " Welfare is a poor substitute for human rights." We have to beware of the hypocrisy of denying a man his rightful sustenance in order thereafter to supply his wants by our gifts. Almsgiving is a dangerous instrument both for the giver and the receiver. That is why Jesus specifically warns us: " Take heed that ye do not your alms before men ". Lüthi illustrates the peril of almsgiving as a substitute for social righteousness from his own experience as a Swiss: in this country we can readily supply examples of the use of " charity " to deflect the Christian conscience from its social duty.

In any case, we are reminded, almsgiving can only be an alleviation, never an answer. A perpetual warning against an over-estimation of " charity " as a solution to the social problem is given us in the story of the Widow's Mite. For there we see the pretentious giving of the rich written off as of no real value in God's sight: " For all these have of their abundance cast in unto the offerings of God."

The modern world has, however, evolved another answer to the social problem which has not yet been fully understood by the Christian Church. Technical science has come to the rescue of oppressed humanity with its instruments for saving life and labour. Lüthi asks the awkward question whether the Church has really welcomed all that has been done by Technics (the expression he uses to describe modern inventions such as the bicycle, the sewing-machine, the gas and electric appliances as well as the whole range of modern applied science) for the alleviation of the distress of mankind. Over against this development the Church seems often to have stood in the place of the son in the parable who said " I go " and went not, while the scientist has been the son who, professing no filial obedience, carried out the Father's will.

There is something here that needs theological elucidation for our day. Too often it appears to the laymen as if the

Church is always on the side of " nature " as against human invention. But, in this connexion " nature " is frequently identified simply with the devices of a pre-technical age. We praise God for the work of the plough, but are still shy of praising him for the work of the tractor. A farmer complained to me a few days ago that when he attended Harvest Thanksgiving in his church he missed the note of thanksgiving for the wonderful mechanical gifts of God to this generation which have been instrumental in providing additional food for His children. Technics has been part of the modern answer to the social problem: to what extent has the Church formulated a doctrine of Providence and Grace that takes account of this answer?

Lüthi is, of course, well aware of the limitations of technics for the solution of man's distresses. The high hopes of the scientific idealists of a previous generation have been shattered. We see now clearly that Utopia is not to be reached by a straight-line advance in technical and medical science. He quotes *The Grapes of Wrath* by Steinbeck, where in actual fact the dream has come true of " everyman with his own automobile ", and where that very automobile has become the symbol of a more terrible poverty and misery. Technics could bring us the day when every man has his own aeroplane, but still we should find men branded in their poverty and distress by the comparative insignificance of their aeroplane, and the wretchedness of the society in which they use it. " Once it was the trousers, then the shoes, by which men recognised Lazarus; in the generation of advanced Technics, it might well be the aeroplane through whose bumps and patches and holes poverty will grin."

Technical civilisation has also brought additional possibilities of misery to the under-privileged. This consideration brings us to the domain of economic and political movements. The Church is always at a disadvantage in these spheres where expert knowledge is an essential if sound judgments are to be made. But that disadvantage should not muzzle the Church in the discharge of her duty to claim the whole of human life for the obedience of Christ. Lüthi frankly recognises that through political methods, and party tactics, astounding social improvements have been wrought, as well as catastrophic upheavals for millions of mankind. On the political issue, as

such, he sees the choice for Christians as something much more complicated than a simple support of Right or Left. Many of us would agree with him when he says that in the present situation the choice is really between a slightly greater emphasis on " Liberalism, Freedom, Individualism ", or else on " Socialism, Community, and Justice "—neither attitude excluding respect for the other. We are either " Liberal-Socialist " or " Socialist-Liberal ". (Needless to say by " Liberalism " he means much more than the tenets of any particular party using the name.) Lüthi himself feels that in the present crisis the Christian emphasis ought to be ever so slightly more on the side of Socialism, Community, and Justice, without underestimating the importance of Liberalism, Freedom, and Individualism. He utters a salutary warning against the misuse of the word " freedom " in current political propaganda. Is there a true freedom apart from social justice?

In the last resort, neither technics nor politics can offer the decisive answer to the social problem of mankind. This leads us to the heart of the problem which Lüthi considers under the heading: " The Sacrifice of Christ ".

Neither alsmgiving nor technics takes account of the real origin of our social woes—which is to be found within man himself. " The social distress of this world is, as we have seen, not an inevitable destiny, but, we must add, the social distress of this world is *guilt*." God wants no one to hunger or freeze: if it happens then it is man's fault. The world has enough to provide for everyone. We are forced to consider the effect of human greed in the production of shortages and distress. And that involves us not only in condemnation of mass exploitation, but in the judgment of our own actions in the smallest detail of even family life. Those who were prisoners-of-war know very well how in a small community the egoistic impulses are revealed in all their strength and are always a major factor in disturbing the fair distribution of goods. Human selfishness is at the root of all human distress, and the real answer to the social problem must have something to say to that selfishness.

According to Lüthi, we can see the Christian answer in the very juxtaposition of the central requests of the Lord's Prayer: " Give us this day our daily bread *and* forgive us our trespasses." The problem of bread and the problem of forgiveness are indis-

solubly linked. Man indeed lives by bread—therefore the social problem must be taken seriously: but man lives also by every word that comes from the mouth of God. And the chief Word of God, the central Word of the whole Bible, is not Bread but *Forgiveness.*

This recognition does not contradict the argument for a " holy materialism ". It simply reminds us that there is also an " unholy materialism ". Lüthi quotes here from a speech made at a recent political meeting in a suburb of Basel: " I don't understand why Christians prattle so much about guilt and forgiveness. Give everyone bread, and we shall have Paradise on earth, and all your problems are solved with one stroke." To this a Christian " holy materialism " has a dozen apt replies, but the gist of them lies in the absolute necessity of a cleansing and purging of the human heart. " What would this despiser of forgiveness say to a peasant who daily and richly fed and watered his cattle, but left their stalls for a week without cleaning them out? . . . We have seen in our land for years a generation that has had a quite sufficiently loaded table become ever smaller and more miserable, because it thought that it could live on bread alone without forgiveness." " A nation can perish with a full manger, even if it is the manger of Soviet-Russia, or with ingots of gold, even if it is the ingots of the U.S.A., in unforgiven sin."

Therefore the final answer to the social problem must lie with the proclamation of forgiveness—the Christian Gospel. Forgiveness has been won for men by Christ, and waits to be recognised and accepted by the peoples. Forgiveness has come to us through sacrifice—a sacrifice of such immensity that no man could offer it. It has been brought to us through God's act in the death of Christ on the cross. Only one thing is greater than guilt, and that is the perfect sacrifice of Good Friday. Nothing has greater significance for the solution of the social problem that that which happened once for all under Pontius Pilate's governorship in Jerusalem. From that point there flows a stream of the sacrificial spirit through the world, wherever belief in this sacrifice is living.

Gratitude is therefore that mainspring of Christian social action—a response to the sacrifice of Christ. Our " holy materialism ", our concern with the distresses of our fellows, is

inspired by the thankful acceptance of the forgiving grace of God in Christ.

The *final* solution of the social problem is " hidden in the Word that speaks of a new heaven and a new earth ". But Lüthi leaves no room for a passive " spirituality " in face of the needs of the hour. " Until that day there stands in the midst of the nations the Table that no power in the world can set up or put away. This Table in the midst of the nations offers both requirements—Community and Freedom. It is prepared in the presence of all enemies. On this Table are the cup with the wine and the plate with the bread. Here the double prayer of everyone who believes and loves is fulfilled: ' Give us this day our daily bread *and* forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us '."

THE IDEA OF SUBSTITUTION IN THE DOCTRINE OF THE ATONEMENT

by The Rev. F. W. CAMFIELD

"I believe that we have to learn anew what the Holy Scriptures say and mean by substitution of Jesus Christ and satisfaction."[1] These words, spoken by Karl Barth in the course of a discussion on "The Christian as Witness", provide much food for reflection. For if there is one conclusion which had come almost to be taken for granted in enlightened Christian quarters, it is that the idea of substitution has led theology on a wrong track; and that the word "substitution" must now be dropped from the doctrine of the Atonement as too heavily laden with misleading and even false connotations. By "liberal" or "modernist" theology the idea of substitution is of course rejected out of hand. And even the theology which prides itself on being "positive" and "evangelical" and which seeks to maintain lines of communication with the great traditional doctrines of atonement is on the whole disposed to reject it. And this, not merely on the ground that it holds implications which are irrational and morally offensive, but even and specifically on the ground that it is unscriptural. Thus Dr. Vincent Taylor as a result of an exhaustive examination of the "Idea of Atonement in the New Testament" gives it as his conclusion that the idea of substitution has no place in the New Testament writings; that in fact it is opposed to the fundamental teaching of the New Testament; that even St. Paul though he sometimes trembles on the edge of substitutionary conceptions nevertheless avoids them. It is difficult to escape the impression that Dr. Vincent Taylor's anxiety to eliminate the idea of substitution from evangelical theology has coloured his interpretation of the New Testament witness. But his conclusions provide a striking indication of the tendency at work in modern evangelical circles. It is felt that nothing has done more to bring the evangelical doctrine of the Atonement into disrepute than the idea of substitution; and therefore, something like a sigh of relief makes itself heard when it is suggested that this idea rests on a

[1] *God in Action*, p. 123, Eng. Trans.

misunderstanding of the teaching of scripture. But not only are substitutionary theories of the Atonement banned as unscriptural, they are also, strangely enough, declared to be, at bottom, irreconcilable with the creative and formative principles of Reformation doctrine. A work which has been widely hailed as a critical and liberating event in the development of the doctrine of the Atonement is the recent book of Dr. Gustaf Aulén entitled *Christus Victor*. In this book Dr. Aulén announces in somewhat triumphant tones that the ideas of satisfaction, merit, and substitution, traditionally associated with Reformation teaching, belong neither to scripture nor to the primitive thought of the Church, and definitely and decisively not to the teaching of Martin Luther; but that they spring from those juristic and legalistic conceptions which crept into the medieval Church, and which find their clearest expression in Anselm's epoch-making work, *Cur Deus Homo*. These conceptions, Aulén declares, live on in the teaching of the Protestant Scholastics of the seventeenth century, who wrongly supposed that they were maintaining and developing Luther's doctrine, but who, in point of fact, were harking back to ideas which Luther had transcended and discredited. As over against all such conceptions, Aulén proclaims what he calls the " classic " idea of the Atonement which he declares to be Scriptural, Primitive and Lutheran (even he could scarcely call it Reformed, that is Calvinistic, and it is significant that he does not mention Calvin at all); and to be therefore both Catholic and Evangelical as against medieval perversions. Aulén's English translator (Father A. G. Hebert, of the Society of the Sacred Mission) can go so far as to see in this " classic " idea of the Atonement an augury of the reunion between Protestantism and Catholicism, since it summons both back to the rock from whence they were hewn.[1] Now it does not lie within the scope of this article to discuss this conception in detail. Indeed it would be impossible to do so, for nowhere in his book does Aulén work it out. But briefly, it represents the Atonement not as a deed of satisfaction made from man's side to the claims of the holiness and righteousness of God, but as an entry of God in Christ into the realm of the evil powers of the world which hold man's life captive, and a triumphing over them. Aulén insists that this

[1] *Christus Victor*, p. x.

constitutes genuine atonement and not salvation and deliverance only, " because the drama is a cosmic drama, and the victory over the hostile powers brings to pass a new relation, a relation of reconciliation between God and the world; and, still more, because in a measure the hostile powers are regarded as in the service of the Will of God the Judge of all, and the executants of His judgment. Seen from this side, the triumph over the opposing powers is regarded as a reconciling of God Himself; He is reconciled by the very act in which He reconciles the world to Himself."[1]

All this seems to us to be gravely deficient. We maintain against Aulén that here the thought of atonement is never really reached. This " classic " idea does not get beyond reconciliation to atonement as its basis. It is to be noted that sin is here spoken of as a power to be overcome, but not as a guilt to be covered, expiated, blotted out. The thought of guilt scarcely makes its appearance, and is certainly nowhere pushed into the forefront. One could almost say that all that happens in this " classic " idea is that militaristic and strategical metaphors come to take the place of juristic and forensic; and it may be seriously questioned whether this is an improvement. How can victory over evil as a *power* be atonement for evil as a *guilt*? What does such a victory do to repair the *past*? Is not the past here regarded as something which need not be taken into serious account? But atonement means repairing and rectification of the past, or at last it means nothing at all.

The attempt to identify Luther with this " classic " idea is surely most strange. Aulén quotes certain vigorous words of Luther which speak of Christ's victory over " sin, death, God's wrath, hell, the devil, and all evil " as being made ours by faith; but he completely ignores Luther's insistence that the efficacy of Christ's sacrifice and triumph is made ours " by imputation ".[2] The side-tracking of this fundamental constituent of Luther's teaching involves its perversion. That which is made ours " by imputation " cannot stand in that direct, continuous, unbroken line with Christ's own victorious achievement which is necessary to Aulén's so-called " classic " idea.

[1] Ibid., p. 21.

[2] Luther's *Epistle to the Galatians*: " The true rules of Christianity "—" Here is to be noted, that these three things, faith, Christ, acceptation or imputation, must be found together."

But what specially concerns us at the moment is that we are presented from the evangelical side with a view of the Atonement which has absolutely renounced the idea of substitution, and which on that very account is declared to be the doctrine which has the one hope of the future.

Now the purpose of this article is to call a halt to this growing tendency to banish the idea of substitution from the doctrine of the Atonement. More still, its purpose is to plead that this idea is central to the whole Christian gospel. We believe that with the idea of substitution removed, not the doctrine of the Atonement only, but the whole New Testament picture of Christ falls to pieces; and that therefore nothing is more necessary than its recovery, rehabilitation and re-interpretation.

It is understandable enough that this idea should have become suspect. Few would wish to defend the forms in which it has, all too often, been presented. We can no longer speak of the transfer of guilt from sinful man to the sinless Christ (a conception to which Luther comes very near, if indeed he does not fall right over into it).[1] Guilt by its very nature cannot be transferred. And we shall speak only with great reserve about Christ enduring the *punishment* of sin. Punishment as such can do nothing to expiate guilt or to repair the past. And we shall be alertly on guard against every tendency to represent Christ as a kind of third party standing between man and God, and, in man's place, compounding a debt which man had incurred. And most important, perhaps of all, we shall insist that the Atonement, though wrought from man's side, was in no sense wrought out of man's own resources, but that it was from first to last a deed of God Himself in which He effected His gracious purpose of reconciliation and forgiveness. Aulén declares that in the old satisfaction and substitution theories, and specially in the work of Anselm, the Atonement though it has God for its author is yet presented to God by Christ as *man*, and that therefore it was the deed of humanity in Him. There is, he contends, a breach, a discontinuity in the atoning act, according to which it is a divine-human act and not an act purely divine. And Dr. A. R. Whately who in his book *The Focus of Belief* here follows Aulén, asserts that the humanity of Christ was

[1] See Luther's *Epistle to the Galatians* on 3.13. The language, however, is dramatic and " psychological ".

merely instrumental in the deed of atonement.[1] The purpose of Aulén and Whately in referring the atoning deed purely to God and God's grace is rightful and must be upheld, but it is open to grave question whether we may speak of the humanity of Christ as merely instrumental. Does not this amount to virtual docetism? Have we not here a failure to grasp the idea of the pre-existent God-manhood of Christ as an integral element, a " moment " in God's own being as He stands related to the humanity created by Him? But, however that may be, it cannot be denied that there is much weight in the criticisms levelled against the old theories of substitution and satisfaction, and that these theories stand in need of new formulation and expression.

We shall, we believe, make the most hopeful start in the task which we have set before us, if we take the idea of substitution as applied to Christ and Christ's work in the broadest and most inclusive way. Our conviction is, that the reason why Dr. Vincent Taylor and others are unable to find substitution in the New Testament, is that they look for it exclusively in those passages which deal directly with the Atonement itself. They do not perceive the significance of the fact that the New Testament as a whole, and throughout the length and breadth of its witness, is concerned with a reality, which, as an object of man's faith and trust, is set forth as standing in the place of, and instead of, man himself, and the whole world of his common experience. If this reality, as standing thus, drops out of sight, it is perhaps not to be wondered at that the specific passages which deal directly with the Atonement should be found lacking in definite reference to the idea of substitution. But this idea is throughout presupposed. It forms the background of everything that is said about Christ and His meaning, and not merely of His atoning work as such. We will begin then with the background, and we will attempt to sketch it in a few sentences.

Christian faith is faith in Christ and in Christ *alone*. The divine revelation, reconciliation and redemption is given and effected in Christ and in Christ *alone*. By the Christian proclamation, the gaze of men is directed to Christ and to Christ *alone*—His person, His work, the promise given to the world in Him. The hope of the future is in the appearing, the mani-

[1] *The Forms of Belief*, p. 135 ff.

festation of Christ Himself. The Christian life is a life in Christ. All this tremendous affirmation carries with it a tremendous and, in a sense, we may say, an annihilating negative. Faith in Christ and in Christ alone—that is to say, not in man, not in the world, not in history, not in nature, not in morality, not in the reason which would synthesise the visible and experienced reality of life. Christ is an eschatological reality, is *the* eschatological reality which disqualifies all these other things as sources of revelation and grounds of confidence. Christ is the name of a new cosmos which is set for man's faith and trust in place of the old; a new realm of reality which is given (*note*, given) in place of the old realms of nature, man, and history. We preach not ourselves, not our humanity, our history, our spiritual nature, our human philosophy, but Christ Jesus as Lord. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but the word of Christ abides. The world passeth away and the lust thereof, but he that doeth the will of God (and that will is Christ) abideth for ever. In the world we have tribulation, but Christ has overcome the world. This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith—*our* faith, not faith in general, but the faith which has Christ as its object. We are justified by this faith *alone*. We look not at the things that are seen, but at the things that are not seen (that is, the things that are *revealed*, and that is again the new things which make up Christ) for the things that are seen are temporal, but the things that are not seen are eternal. The whole New Testament revolves round the theme that everything that belongs to our life is radically different because of Christ. All is different *in* Christ. Christ *is* the difference. To believe in Christ is therefore the first necessity. To put all one's trust and all one's hope in Christ is the primal call. To let Christ be not simply the author, but the finisher of our faith; not simply the initial stimulation, and not merely the perpetual stirrer up of faith, but the one object of faith, so that faith hangs on nothing and on nobody but on Him alone —this is the Christian life, and the Christian solution of the problem of life. Can anyone seriously doubt that this is the authentic note of the New Testament? Apart from this the New Testament simply falls to pieces. To attempt to get round this, to suppose that it needs some qualification, is to surrender the New Testament. The Christian is not a man who has

lighted upon some new factor in his world hitherto unknown to him: he is a man who has been given for his faith a substitute for his world. He believes, not because he has discovered grounds for believing in the world in which he lives; not because he thinks that he can give a spiritual or theistic interpretation of the world, but because, where God and ultimate truth are concerned, Christ comes to take the place of the world. And it is to be noted that all this New Testament witness concerning Christ is quite objectively meant. It is not set forth as a tribute of human valuation. It is not as if, having seen Christ, the believing man feels no inclination for anything of less value. Christ does not stand in comparison with all other realities. He excludes all comparison. He is not a superlative. He is a substitute. Certainly when we turn from the act of faith to the claims of thought, the necessity arises to relate the revelation given in Christ to the world of our experience. We cannot leave these two magnitudes, Christ and the world, to stand apart and isolated over against one another. A Christian philosophy which links up the one with the other must be an ultimate objective of our thought. But first these two magnitudes must be set in their difference the one from the other, and in the displacement of the latter by the former. And until that has been done with a radical decisiveness, there can be no talk of a Christian philosophy.

We repeat, therefore, that the key which unlocks the New Testament, and makes available for us its treasures of wisdom and understanding, of light and power, of promise and hope, is the idea of substitution. Without that idea, the New Testament becomes, if not an entirely closed book to us, yet one which is only partially opened. Instead of the world, Christ. And therefore, instead of *unbelief* and *false belief*, *faith*. Instead of *doubt*, *assurance*. Instead of *sin*, *sanctification*. Instead of *death*, *eternal life*. All this speaks of more than a change *in* man, a change of disposition and outlook, a reformation and a conversion. It speaks of a change *for* man; something given to him in place of what he has, a new world in place of the old.

Now what may be called the rationale of all this becomes apparent when it is recognised that according to the New Testament witness, man is immediately confronted in Christ with the *last things*, the ultimate; and that the last things denote, not

the final goal of the world's evolutionary course, but a critical and all-decisive breach in that course, and its final judgment. The last things are in Christ given to man's faith in place of his evolutionary course, given for his salvation in an act of judgment-grace upon his evolutionary course; given therefore in an all-decisive bearing of judgment upon that course, which takes place for man's sake and in man's place. The salvation in Christ means the last things being offered by God's grace to man's faith, in place of the present things. Therefore man in his faith looks not at the things that are seen, but at the things that are not seen. And so all things are his; for he is Christ's and Christ is God's.

The last things are the things from which man of himself always attempts to escape. He will not face them, for he knows he cannot. True, he cannot really escape them, and in his heart he knows this. He cannot escape them, for in fact they determine his whole existence. But he always seeks to hide from them in one way or another. And the more he comes to realise that they are ultimately inescapable, the more does he seek to hide from them. He comes to hide behind his works, his morality, his sacrifices, his religion. He seeks to justify himself. And in our days he is finding a readily accessible hiding-place in a secularism made available for him by modern science and organisation, through their exploitation and development of material goods and resources. But in Christ man is confronted with the last things in such a way that he is taken out of all his hiding-places. Here we reach the sure ground of the deity of Christ. Here too, we discover the real and ultimate reason why Christ was crucified. Christ was crucified not through a clash of forces inhering in some particular historical situation—the dénouement would have been essentially the same whatever the historical situation—but through man's spiritual situation, a situation which, but for the grace of God, remains the same at all times. Christ was crucified because man, confronted by the last things strove to push them out of his way. But here also we are met by the reality of substitution. Man in faith ceases to justify himself. He now looks to Christ as his justification. And his justification is no mere human experience, but an objective reality to which man's whole existence is related. Justification and substitution stand or fall together.

We may now look a little more closely at the bearing of all this on the doctrine of the Atonement itself. And here we must begin with underlining the great Reformation insistence that objectively the supreme question for every man is this: "How can I know that my sins are forgiven me?" We emphasise the word " objectively ", for though it may be true that that question lurks somewhere in the far and distant background of every man's mind, its emergence into the foreground would seem to be but a rare occurrence. But when man is confronted in Christ with the last things, this question is seen to be an acutely existential question. Forgiveness is not incidental to man's existence; it is fundamental. And the problem of forgiveness is not met and solved by any subjective qualification on the part of the sinner; it is not met and solved by repentance, amendment, or any progressive sanctification of his life. Why not? Because apart from all the doubts and uncertainties surrounding such progressive sanctification, there remains always the fact of the past and its irreparability—the fact, that is, of guilt. How can any repentance, amendment, progressive sanctification repair the past? And if the past can in no sense be repaired and rectified, it is fundamentally meaningless to speak about forgiveness. Sin is not forgiven while the past is simply left standing. If the past has now slipped beyond all control, if it has simply to be left behind, if nothing can be done about it, there can be no real hope or confidence for the future. For it must be emphasised the word " past " denotes the ultimate nature of *all* temporal existence. Temporal life is a " becoming past ". It is a movement into the past. And that means that all life stands in need of rectification. Thus no temporal or incidental rectification of life can be a real rectification. It can by its very nature be only partial; and it can be only superficial. The real problem of life is not, paradoxical as it may seem to say so, the problem of the future, but the problem of the past; or more strictly, it is the problem of the future, because it is first the problem of the past. And could the problem of the past be really and radically solved there would be no fundamental problem of the future.

Now it is strange how little alive thought is to the problem of the past. Philosophy scarcely seems to have faced it. Even the modern Existential philosophy can hardly be said to have

addressed itself to it in any thorough-going fashion, otherwise it would have seen in the Christian doctrine of the Atonement its solution. And the theorists of social reconstruction and progress show no trace of real concern about the past. All their concern is with the future, and what can be made out of the future. The past is simply left stranded on the shores of time. The monstrous evils and gigantic wickedness of the past can, they suppose, be simply allowed to stand, if only they be avoided for the future.

And what is perhaps more remarkable still, modern theories of the Atonement almost without exception ignore this recalcitrant problem of the past. We have had occasion to note already this fundamental defect in Aulén's thought. He fails to see that a victory over the " powers " of evil can be the outcome only of a cancellation of its guilt. A significant experience of Kierkegaard may be alluded to in this connexion. He has left it on record, that though he had learned and had come to believe that God had forgiven his sin, he could not reach real liberation and peace until he had become convinced that God had also forgotten it. This is Christian experience of the very centre. This is psychology of the deepest depths. Kierkegaard could not be satisfied without such atonement as literally buried his sin in Christ's grave; without such atonement as made his sinful past as if it had never been.

A brief note may be added, though with great reserve, from the standpoint of the being, that is, of the transcendence, of God. If the past has simply to be left behind, if it can in no way be rectified, if justification has reference only to the present and the future, how is it possible to speak of the transcendence of God? God becomes, in that case, merely immanent, a principle and power of restoration and sanctification. But an immanent God is, merely as such, no God at all. The past lies outside the control of a merely immanent God. And if in point of fact, the past has not been rectified in His sight, then God has not established His reality in time and history. Atonement is integral to the existence both of God and man. Apart from it, God vanishes and man is lost.

Now man cannot atone. He cannot repair his past. Yet atonement if it is to take place, must take place in man's life and from man's side. How otherwise can it be atonement?

If we may return again to Aulén, it is here that our controversy with his " classic idea " reaches its sharpest point. A deed issuing in a direct and unbroken line from the pure God-head would not be atonement. Such a deed would inevitably be " over man's head ". In order to be real atonement it must issue forth from man's life. Certainly the atoning deed was not wrought *by* man, it was wrought *for* man, but out of man's life. It rose up, so to speak, from man's life through the provision of God and in response to the demand of God. The idea of atonement is dialectical throughout. It means that God became man—*vere Deus*, *vere Homo*—and thus that divine action was translated into terms of human action. Thus the background of the atoning deed is not the Godhead *per se*, but the God-manhood of Christ. And this is what the Church has ever maintained (*pace* Aulén), lacking in clarity as its thought has often been. But if that be so, then the idea of substitution is inevitable, and is constitutive of the doctrine of the Atonement. All that constituted atonement was wrought in our place and in our stead; wrought verily in *our* place, that is, wrought *for* us and *as our act*. What we could not accomplish Christ accomplished on our behalf. The infliction and judgment which we could not bear, He bore for us. He took our place and on behalf of us all He made satisfaction for our sins and for the sins of the whole world. It was not the Godhead *qua* Godhead that atoned; it was the God-manhood. And that means, not simply God *in* man, but God *as* man. The manhood was integral and essential and not merely instrumental. And that means in the acutest sense, substitution.

Our concern in this article is with the substitutionary aspect of the divine atonement. It does not fall within its scope to discuss at length the nature of the atoning deed and to show how it meets and solves the problem of the past. But a brief note bearing directly upon this matter cannot be dispensed with. The brevity here necessary, and indeed the very nature of the subject matter itself, will inevitably involve the use of somewhat abstract language. What we have in view in speaking of atonement is the offering to God from the side of man of a holiness corresponding to His own; and, for this is of crucial importance, an offering of holiness *conditioned by man's sin*—conditioned, that is, by man's past, for his past is always sin. The

atoning, expiating, satisfying element in Christ's sacrifice was, as Dr. P. T. Forsyth was never tired of pointing out, not suffering, not death, not punishment, as such, but holiness. Neither suffering, nor death, nor punishment can in themselves do anything to expiate guilt, to repair the past, to satisfy the demands of a holy God. God can be reconciled and satisfied, only as He meets from man's side a holiness answering in quality to His own. But this holiness must be a holiness which is conditioned by man's sin. The past can be repaired, can stand justified before God, only as it issues in, works up to, culminates in, becomes the material of, a holiness corresponding to that of God Himself. This it cannot do of itself; cannot do in and through any powers immanent within the course of passing time; cannot do, if we may so express it, teleologically. Only if through divine action, the very principle of sin pervading the time course as such, can be made the material and the instrument of a holiness within time, which goes up to meet the holiness of God, can atonement take place and reparation be effected. Holiness *per se*, holiness in abstraction, holiness withdrawn from fundamental conditioning by sin itself, would doubtless honour God, but would be no satisfaction for sin. But a conditioned holiness, a holiness which is what it is because of the sin of the world, a holiness, which, to put it in a bold word, would not be, but for the sin of the world—this holiness really atones, really satisfies, really repairs. The actualisation of this holiness is the supreme miracle; the miracle which holds within itself the promise and power of the resurrection of the past into the eternal kingdom of God. From this point of view, but from this point of view only, can we take upon our lips Augustine's bold cry, *O felix culpa*. This holiness must be both given by God and offered to God. It must be given *by* God; that is, it must arise from His own direct action upon the world. But it must also be offered to God; it must meet Him from another side than His own, from the side of man. It cannot be simply His own direct action upon the world. It must be an answering to such direct action. Only as our doctrine seeks to do justice both to this direct action and to this answering, can it be a doctrine of real atonement. And as such it will be a doctrine of substitution.

THE THEOLOGY OF EMIL BRUNNER

by The Rev. Professor DAVID CAIRNS

As a theologian, Emil Brunner has always had two main concerns: firstly the exposition of the special revelation of God, which culminated in Christ, and its maintenance as something distinct from the general revelation of God in nature, conscience and history; and, secondly, the evaluation of this general revelation from the standpoint of faith in the special revelation. Like Barth and most of his contemporaries in theological study, Brunner started in the liberal camp, and his first important book, *Mysticism and the Word* (1927), was a critical discussion of the whole trend of Protestant theology since the collapse of verbal inspirationism. In it, a short study of the wide and difficult field of mysticism is followed by a detailed examination of the theology of Schleiermacher, who is taken as the chief representative of Protestant theology since the days of the *Enlightenment*. Although *Mysticism and the Word* has not been translated into English, the loss to the English-reading public is lessened by the fact that much of the argument is recapitulated with less detailed reference to Schleiermacher in Brunner's next book, *The Mediator*. This is divided into three parts; the first is entitled " Presuppositions ", and the second and third deal respectively with the person and work of the Mediator. In the first part Brunner argues that the usual evaluation of Schleiermacher's theological work is false. It has been customary to contrast him with Kant and Hegel. Kant found that faith in God was one of the postulates of the practical reason, or the will. Only if a God, immortality and freedom were postulated, would it be possible to fulfil the demands of the categorical imperative. For Hegel the existence of an Infinite Reason was a precondition of the validity of our finite reason. Schleiermacher, in contrast to these thinkers, found the seat of religion in the feeling of absolute dependence. Brunner argues that the important thing about Schleiermacher was his fundamental agreement with Kant, Hegel and others, and their common opposition, conscious or unconscious, to the theology demanded by the facts of the Christian Faith. If faith

be a capacity lodged in human nature, then it is impossible within this framework to do justice to the finality of Jesus Christ which Christians instinctively and necessarily believe to be His due. And not only does an adequate Christology become impossible, but also any adequate doctrine of sin, salvation and revelation. Christ becomes a mere leader, or teacher, or hero or religious genius, and is no longer a Saviour. Sin becomes a sluggishness of the sensible nature, or a partial emphasis, necessary as a transitional stage on the way to a more balanced attitude of the will. It has lost its real nature, which is rebellion against God. Salvation is the release of certain powers immanent in man, or the realisation of a unity which has been there all the time, and revelation is essentially discovery of truth, and never the impartation to us by means of a decisive act in history of a truth that we could never have found out for ourselves, or the proclamation of a forgiveness that we could never have had the right to give to ourselves.

In opposition to the views of Schleiermacher Brunner expounds the faith of the New Testament, which was rediscovered in its inexhaustible glory by the men of the Reformation, for whom the Saviour, faith, forgiveness, salvation and revelation mean what they meant for St. Paul and St. John. In these first two books, he asserts the distinctiveness of the special revelation, while the latter part of *The Mediator* is taken up by a detailed discussion of the person and work of Christ.

Now we come to deal with Brunner's second great concern, his attempt to be faithful to the Biblical teaching about the general revelation, " the revelation in creation ".

(1) God has revealed Himself in creation. The things that are made declare " the invisible things of Him . . . even His eternal power and godhead " (Rom. 1.20). Further, the word of the law is written in the hearts of all men, even the gentiles. Does this revelation in creation, so to speak, " get through " to the mind and heart of the natural man? This is rather a difficult query, to which a definite " yes " or " no " cannot be given, and close attention is needed if one is to grasp Brunner's answer. In quoting Romans 1.20 he says that Paul speaks " not merely of a possibility of knowledge of God which was once present but is now lost, nor yet merely of a possibility of knowledge of God present to-day, but of an actual

knowledge, though admittedly of a knowledge which as a consequence of human sin is at once changed into delusion" (*Revelation and Reason*, p. 64).

(2) Although there is a revelation in creation, which is actually acknowledged, and, as it were, involuntarily known, Brunner goes on to say that a valid natural theology is neither actual nor possible. He means here such a natural theology as is propounded by the Thomists, which, it is claimed, possesses cogency even for those who do not accept the Christian faith. There is, says Brunner, no possibility of laying down a foundation of natural theology on which a superstructure of supernatural theology can be based. What actually happens to the revelation in creation in the mind of the natural man is the process described by St. Paul: "Because that, when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, their foolish heart was darkened" (Rom. 1.21). Instead of a valid natural theology, we have the manifold and mutually contradictory religions and theologies of heathendom.

(3) But if there be no valid natural theology, there is an actual one, whose expression is this strange phenomenon of the varied and mutually opposed pantheons of heathendom. And it is our right and our duty to ask as Christians what is the meaning of this natural theology, in all its contradictions. Far from building upon it, we recognise our inability to find in it an essence of agreed teaching about God. But looking at it with the eye of faith, we find in it a witness to two things. First, it is witness to the fact that man is created by God, and is in a special relation to Him. The Divine purpose in creating man was that he should respond in love to that call of God which brings him into being. And the second thing to which natural theology bears witness is the fact of man's sin. For man gives back a perverted answer to God's call, and as a result of this his knowledge of God becomes perverted, idolatrous. He forms a wrong picture of the God to whom his life is now a wrong answer.

The true relation of the special revelation to general revelation is thus dialectical. Because man is in the image of God, there are elements in natural theology which faith in the special revelation can affirm, but because natural reason is darkened by sin, there are elements always present which it must deny.

And the denial and the affirmation are always inseparably bound up together. There is therefore no valid natural theology. Why then does Brunner maintain so stubbornly the existence of a revelation in creation, if it can be of so little good to us, who believe in Christ? There are many grounds, and one or two of them will now be very briefly noted.

First and foremost, Brunner believes in it, because the evidence of Scripture is quite unmistakable. In *Nature and Grace* (1934) Brunner gives three further reasons for his insistence on the general revelation. It is, he says, necessary for Christian ethics, for dogmatics, and for evangelistic and missionary work. What does Brunner mean, in the first place, by saying that the general revelation is necessary for Christian ethics? In *The Divine Imperative* Brunner talks of the will of God as commandment. His real will for men is that they should love Him with their whole heart and mind, and their neighbours as themselves. On this commandment alone, however, it is not possible to build up a Christian ethic. There are in the life of society certain structures, called ordinances, which have been put there by the Divine will, and these constitute a part of the general revelation. Some of them, like marriage and the family, are not dependent for their being on the fact of sin, and so are to be called ordinances of creation. Others, like the state, are essentially dependent on the fact of sin. Even such ordinances, called ordinances of preservation, are, however, signs of God's grace to a fallen world. For without them, sin would quickly bring the world to disintegration, and God's final purpose of grace would become impossible. The true nature of these ordinances and their purpose can be understood only by the Christian, but he must take account of them in his search for his duty. He must not think of himself just as an individual called upon to love others, but also as a father, a citizen, a member of a trade-union, who has to see that he does justice to others whom he meets in their capacity as members of these societies, and within the framework of these ordinances. This is a commonplace of the Christian ethics of the Reformers, but it must be pointed out that it implies the existence of a general revelation.

Now does this not appear to be a departure from the loyalty of the Christian to Christ alone, and an acceptance of the

ordinances as a second source and norm of revelation of God's will in rivalry to the special revelation? Is not this precisely the danger which Barth saw looming in the theology of Gogarten, and of which he warned Brunner, who admits (*Nature and Grace*, p. 36) that the warning was perfectly justified by the event, when Gogarten fell a victim to the Nazi claim that *Blood and Soil* were a second source and norm of the revelation of the Divine will?

I believe that Brunner does not come under this condemnation. We must remember that for him it is the eye of faith in Christ which has to judge how within the framework of the ordinances he must be obedient to God's call. The existence of the ordinances does quite clearly affect the *content* of my duty. But the ordinances are part of the material in which my loyalty to Christ must be expressed, and they do *not* constitute a rival *norm*. Family or state can never be the source of an unconditioned claim upon me; only Christ can be that. So that the doctrine of the ordinances is an impediment to my loyalty to Christ only when they are put in His place as the source of an unconditional obligation.

A second reason that Brunner gives for his belief in the general revelation is that we are all sinners. Sin is not done in pure ignorance; it is always against God. Thus in some sense sin implies knowledge of Him, and universal sin universal knowledge. There must therefore be a general revelation. The Revelation in Christ opens men's eyes to the true nature of their sin, but does not constitute them sinners for the first time. This fact is an important point in the work of the missionary, for he will seek a point of contact with them in their consciences, and not in the details of their natural theology. Barth agrees that there is a point of contact, but says it is due not to a general revelation, but to the work of the Holy Spirit at the moment when actual preaching takes place, or witness is made.

Before going on to an account of the later development of Brunner's thought, it may be worth while making short and more specific reference to the animated controversy between the two theologians, which came to a head in 1934 with the publication by Brunner of his booklet *Nature and Grace*. To this Barth retorted by publishing his pamphlet *No!* The issue

at stake was the existence of a general revelation, and the validity of natural theology. Barth denied both, and claimed that Brunner believed in both. This discussion is not finished yet, and while some of the issues have been cleared up, a final clarification may still be hoped for. Points have been scored by both sides, and Brunner has admitted that some of the confusion has been due to ambiguity in his own language. For long he used the term *Natural Theology* to describe *both* a theology like the Roman Catholic one, which claimed to build up a limited knowledge of God on grounds cogent to reason apart from faith, *and* a theology which, like Brunner's own, started confessedly from Christian faith, and interpreted nature, conscience and human nature in the light thrown upon them by that faith. This double usage persisted through the book *Nature and Grace* but has now in Brunner's *Dogmatics* been given up in the interests of clarity.

In *No!* Barth makes several good points against Brunner. It is really not quite clear how much knowledge the natural man has of God according to Brunner's thought. It might be possible to collect statements of his on the subject which appear to be incompatible with each other. To a large degree this appearance of contradiction in Brunner's thought is due to the very nature of the subject. The knowledge that the natural man has of God is inextricably mixed with error. In a sense, therefore, it is knowledge of God, and in a sense it is error. At one time the positive moment may be stressed, and at another the negative. But for Barth the whole stress is apt to be laid on the negative moment, and in this matter he is not a dialectical theologian at all.

Barth's main concern, and indeed his sole concern, is to show that if you admit any knowledge of God from the general revelation you have compromised the Reformers' principle that we are saved by faith and grace alone. For if we can know God in any other way than through Christ, since there can be no knowledge of God which is not saving knowledge, then men can be saved by some other means than by grace and faith in Christ.

The Divine Imperative, to which we have already referred, was published in 1932. This work has had a considerable influence in Great Britain. It bears evidence of an extra-

ordinary range of reading and knowledge. The practical working out of the ethic in reference to social, economic, political and international problems is felt to be unusually wise and suggestive. Perhaps the long traditions of self-government in politics of both Switzerland and Britain, and the common sober practicality of the two peoples make our minds open to what he has to say. There is no attempt in this book to give a casuistry of ethics in the Roman Catholic style; the embodiment of justice and the content of obedience to the commandment of love are always in the last resort left to the freedom of the individual conscience guided by the Holy Spirit. But suggestions and indications are given about the right way in which to seek the embodiment of God's command in the varying situations where decision is called for. In the opinion of many Brunner has succeeded in writing a Reformed Christian Ethic which is vitally in touch with modern problems, and yet free from the suspicion of legalism and also from the taint of a dualism in which the service of God is not characterised by that total obedience which we owe Him.

Although it came at a rather later date, this is the place where Brunner's book *Justice and the Social Order* (1943) should be mentioned. It deals, not with that righteousness which is by faith, but with that eternal justice which stands behind all positive law as its norm. We are to-day, says the writer, confronted by the moral bankruptcy of western civilisation. For the first time in history injustice has been erected into a principle, and the embodiment of this perversion is the totalitarian state. Here we have the direct result of that relativist thought which concentrated all attention in the sphere of philosophy of law on positive law, and would not hear of an absolute norm of justice. To-day we must return to that conception of an absolute norm, although Brunner feels that the old name of "natural law" should be abandoned. The greatest of the ambiguities in the use of this term to-day is due to the fact that the Nazis perverted it to describe the so-called "right" of the stronger, a purely naturalistic use of the term directly contrary to the universally current sense in past generations.

One of the main problems connected with justice concerns equality and inequality. In determining the just treatment of a man, where is equality, and where inequality the con-

clusive factor? For Nazism, equality counted for nothing. In Stoic thought it counted for everything. Christianity asserts the fundamental importance of equality and the secondary importance of inequality. Men were created by God as individuals to fit into a society in which each would be dependent on the others. This is no regrettable weakness, but a part of the Divine plan, that the strong should serve the weak. But there are certain fundamental rights which all men share equally and inalienably, though not unconditionally: the right to work, to be free in person and to possess something of their own.

What is the relevance of the teaching of the Bible to justice as we have described it? In the New Testament there is little about it, almost nothing in the teaching of Jesus, for He was concerned with the higher righteousness of love. The writers of the epistles did see the need for the ordinances, and man's duty as a Christian to fit in with them. But they never forget their main message that since God has loved us, we are to deal with others as persons in love. Nor can the Old Testament be understood to give us a casuistry of precepts which we can apply to the world around us. The people of the Old Testament were living by a revelation which has in part been transcended, and in circumstances very different from those in which we live to-day. Even the ten commandments cannot be made the framework for a Christian ethic.

The application of Brunner's principles may be called an ethic of sanctified commonsense. In politics the state is to be regarded as the most widely embracing of the ordinances, whose task is to serve the others, of which the prototype is the family. The State takes over the task of co-ordinating the ordinances only *faute de mieux*, when such control is not provided from within. In economic affairs, Brunner stands for a modified paternalist structure of business, being eager to ascribe to each man his responsibility, rights and place, and fair reward. Into the discussion of the wide problems of government, national and international, which Brunner has carefully studied here, we have no time to enter. A very interesting study might be made of his views on these subjects in comparison with those of Maritain and Niebuhr.

This book has met with more criticism in Britain than most

of Brunner's. Some have felt that the author has taken too much at their own value the moral pretensions of modern bourgeois democracy, and has not seen clearly enough the self-interest and hypocrisy behind them. Brunner is himself not unaware of this criticism, but stands by his own critical evaluation of socialism, and is content to await the verdict of the next few years, which he believes will make clearer the dangers of the totalitarian state, which he says may well have the outward form of a democracy, and need not at all appear to the careless eye as a dictatorship.

In 1937 *Man in Revolt* was published. It is an exposition of the Christian Doctrine of Man, and in the opinion of many is Brunner's greatest book. It is almost needless to repeat that here, as usual, the standpoint taken is one of Christian faith all through. There is developed a conception of man as a being whose very essence is act, an act of response to God's creative Word spoken to him. All things are created through the Word, but the peculiarity of man is that his being is not like that of a thing. He is essentially a being responding to the Divine Word. The fact of sin does not alter the essential constitution of man, for as sinner he still must answer God, cannot escape from the relation to Him, but now his life-answer is a perverted one. He is in revolt, and can no longer answer in love as God meant him to do. In revolting against God, he is also in revolt against his own divinely ordained destiny, and his own being. The disastrous effects of this are to be seen in every sphere of life and in every part of man's constitution, body, soul and spirit. This disorder is vaguely felt by all men, though each has his own way of running away from it, or misinterpreting it.

There is a strong anti-scholastic polemic running through *Man in Revolt*. Since the person of man is not regarded as " an individual substance of rational nature " (Boethius), but as an act of response to God, the consequence follows that any doctrine of man must be false which does not take into account this relationship to God, which is of the very essence of man's being. Hence also the questionable nature of natural theology, since man's whole being, including his reason, is so much more affected by his sin than the Thomists will allow. It is certain that more thought will have to be given to the nature of personal being, and the use of the concepts of act and substance with

reference to it. But Brunner has advanced the discussion considerably by his stimulating contribution, and given us insights which can never be lost.

Perhaps the most brilliant of Brunner's books is a comparatively small one, *The Divine Human Encounter*. This book says a number of things which Brunner had been saying, though with less clarity and force, in earlier works. And yet it is an entirely new book, the most original thing that he has written.

Its thesis is that the great enemy of Christian theology and faith throughout the generations has been the " objectivisation " of faith. In ordinary scientific and philosophical thought we are governed, and rightly so, by the notions of subjectivity and objectivity. Faith does not move in this dimension at all, which with its concept of object and subject belongs to the realm of things. But faith has to deal with the *I-Thou* relationship, to be more exact, if one may use Karl Heim's expression, the dimension of the *Infinite Thou*. The treatment of it as if it were a concern of the *I-it* relationship is not merely an error in thought. It is the attempt to deal with God as if He or His authority were a thing at our disposal, an unwillingness to recognise His unconditional right to sovereignty over us.

Early in the history of the Church the true nature of faith as a personal relation of correspondence between God in Christ and the believer was forgotten, and faith became the subjective assent to an objective doctrine, authorised by the Church. The Reformation meant the temporary rediscovery of the true nature of faith, but soon the infallible Book of Protestantism was substituted as object of faith for the infallible Church of Roman Catholicism. Brunner does not deny, rather he maintains, the importance of true doctrine, and of the contents of the Bible, which belong to the realm of things. For these result from faith, the faith of the apostles in the first instance, and speak to faith, and without them faith could not arise. But this does not affect his main thesis. His later chapters show how the misunderstanding spoken of above has worked disastrously in leading to errors about the nature of Church, Gospel, preaching, and the Christian ministry, and fellowship.

It is interesting to note that here certain ideas propounded by Martin Buber have been useful in giving a fresh understanding of Paul and Luther. One is sometimes doubtful how

far the message of Buber is the same as the Biblical message, and how far it is a kind of Thou-mysticism unrelated to a historical revelation. In this book of Brunner there can be no doubt that the stimulus of Buber has led Brunner to a deeply Christian insight.

Revelation and Reason (1941) has the same structure as many of Brunner's other books. In the first part he treats of the concept of revelation, of Christian faith, and of the God who reveals Himself to faith. In the second part the author deals with the problems of the relation of revelation and faith to reason. The problems of doubt, of science, both natural and historical, and the relationships of the different philosophies to Christian faith are all dealt with. Here also Brunner gives more explicit answer to the questions which readers of his earlier books have sometimes asked, such as: " What is the nature of such knowledge about God as philosophy apart from faith is able to attain? " We must remember that such philosophy, in so far as it attempts to reach the knowledge of God, falls for Brunner under the category of natural theology. We should expect him in consequence to treat of it as involving an inextricable confusion of truth and error. His verdict is that the absolute and normative ideas of reason do not give us knowledge of God. That is, they do not have God as their object, but that they are implanted in our minds by Him, and that the Christian can see this in the light of his faith. When it becomes metaphysical, attempting to give us knowledge of the final realities, philosophy falls into different forms, each of which, taking some concept as its means of interpreting the universe, comes to a different conclusion. The absolute of the philosophers is not the living God who speaks to us in the special revelation which culminates in Christ, who meets us as a person and forgives us. Sometimes Brunner talks as if in the general revelation we were able to reach a certain knowledge about God, while only in the special revelation do we meet Him as a Thou. It is difficult to bring this position into harmony with his doctrine of man's person as essentially, whether in sin or in faith, being in answer to the Word spoken to him by God. Does not that teaching imply an *I-Thou* relationship in the general revelation?

Brunner's most recent work is the first volume of his *Dog-*

matics (1946). It is clear that he does not plan a Dogmatics the size of Barth's. He has probably said more of what he has to say than Barth, though like Barth's, his mind is still fresh and open. In this book he shows a tendency to move still further away from speculative ideas about God, and to emphasise more pointedly than ever the nature of God as He is revealed in His approach to us, as opposed to a supposed being of God as He is in Himself. Whether Brunner may be going too far in this direction is a doubt that arises in the minds of some of his English readers.

This very sketchy summary of Brunner's thought is meant to show a consistent structure. He seeks to stand firmly on the faith in the Christian Revelation, and to carry on the conversation with the outside world. And this he does not only by expounding the Word and by preaching, gifted though he is in both these spheres. He looks at the world itself from the viewpoint of faith, at reason, ethics, the nature of man, his laws, his justice, his religions. And in each case he maintains what he believes to be the Christian interpretation of these things against the other interpretations which may be described as resulting, in Hamann's phrase, from " the misunderstanding of reason with itself ". Brunner admits of course the power of reason in many spheres to arrive at true conclusions without the interference of faith. In abstract subjects like mathematics, faith has nothing to say. There can be no specifically Christian arithmetic. There is, however, a Christian sociology, a Christian view of history, and still more clearly a Christian view of man. Brunner has expounded what he calls *The Principle of Contiguity* (*das Prinzip der Beziehungsnähe*), which lays down the rule that the nearer the theme comes to the nature of man and his relationship to God and the universe, the greater the difference between the interpretation of faith and that of unfaith —the wider, therefore, the gap across which the debate has to be carried on.

Barth's answer to this is that Brunner is neglecting both the task of the Christian preacher, which is to proclaim the Word of God, and also the task of the Christian theologian which is to test the content of preaching to make sure that it is true to the Revelation to which it seeks to bear witness. Brunner's rejoinder is that the believer must enter into living discussion

with his unbelieving partner, and that when he sees that his partner's mind is closed to the acceptance of faith because of misconceptions and misunderstandings, it is no act of love to refuse to deal with these, and return to a preaching of the Word in the void, merely repeating what he has said and what his partner found it impossible to accept. Further, since we all have the unbeliever inside us, such a view would imply that we had no duty of reasoning with our doubts, but that faith was a mere reassertion of the thing that was doubted. The believer will then try to maintain the conversation, without ever leaving the standpoint of faith himself, knowing that he cannot prove the gospel, but believing that there is not a sheer gulf between reasoning and the witness of the Holy Spirit.

From what has been said it will be seen that Brunner's whole interest is in the widest sense of the word evangelistic. It is that which has turned his attention to the problems handled in his books. He is a Churchman who has a passionate interest in the reawakening and strengthening of the Church as Christ's body throughout the world. This is the motive behind his frequent visits in Europe and America, and his position as theological adviser to the World's Committee of the Y.M.C.A. In this movement, which started as a practical expression of Christian love among the young, he sees a great hope for the future of the Church. In him are combined gifts not often found together, a great pastoral interest and a very keen intellect, that is yet not given to hair-splitting. Those who have studied under him can bear witness to his personal interest in his many students, and the clergy in his own Church and other Churches. They cannot forget the stimulus of his lectures, and the comments of the students as they left each morning the classroom in Zürich University. Barth is said to have referred to Brunner's mind as having an *uncanny clarity*, and the result of this clarity is that even in those problems where his readers may disagree with or doubt his conclusions, they know that he has put forward a challenge that must be answered.

A renewal of friendship with him after fifteen years has shown one of his old students that Brunner's power to attract students both by intellectual gifts in discussion and by personal kindness and approachability has not lessened with the passage of time.

The chief change in theological thought in Great Britain in the last twenty years has been a movement towards the right, away from theological liberalism, a greater emphasis on revelation and the Church. The older thinkers have nearly all moved in this direction and there are few liberals among the younger. Fundamentalism has received some fresh strength, but is not theologically a factor of any significance. There has been a real reawakening of theological interest. In England this has partly expressed itself in a turning to the works of the Neo-Thomists and Aquinas himself, in Scotland in a re-examination of Calvin. The names of six contemporary theologians are better known to us than any of our own—Barth, Brunner, Berdiaev, Gilson, Maritain and Niebuhr. Niebuhr and Maritain are perhaps the only ones who are read by those who are not ministers, and indeed, they are read in some degree by those outside the Church; this can be said of only one living English writer on theology, Mr. C. S. Lewis. Among the six names mentioned Barth's is undoubtedly the best known.

As a theologian Brunner has had a far more pervasive influence than Barth, though Barth has affected a smaller number very profoundly. Nearly all Brunner's works have been translated into English, while Barth's huge *Church Dogmatics* has not yet got into English dress beyond its first half-volume, though his *Commentary on Romans* and *Gifford Lectures* are also in English. The advantage gained by Brunner is not merely due to the devotion of Miss Olive Wyon, his chief translator. His books are both easier to understand than Barth's extremely lengthy works, and more congenial. As an Anglican theologian said, " We knew that something of the kind was necessary, and Brunner gave it to us in a form that seemed both more digestible and more reasonable than Barth ". It is clear that many felt that liberal theology gave no adequate expression to the New Testament faith that they knew in their hearts. Though the details of his Christology expounded in *The Mediator* are not accepted without question in this country,[1] Brunner has given us a theology for which, as Dr. Mozley said in his foreword to the English translation of *The Mediator*: " There will be deep gratitude among all those who see no future for any

[1] Nor would they be accepted without reservations to-day, I believe, by Brunner himself.

Christianity except that which rests upon faith in Jesus Christ as the true and only Son of God."

There is not in Great Britain, as there appears to be on the Continent, a Barthian School. Still less is there a Brunnerian School, and this is to be reckoned to Brunner for righteousness. He has influenced many, but it is felt that a school of theologians who take their cue from one man is always sure to be one-sided. There are in Britain few adherents of either of the two theologians so prejudiced that they are unwilling to read, and learn from, the works of the other. The theological passions of the continent have hitherto not been reproduced here.

It is perhaps only in recent years that theologians in this country have begun to enter into thorough critical discussion of Brunner's views. In a number of recent books there appear the evidences of a careful study, more critical in some cases, and more sympathetic in others, of the positions taken by Brunner.

The situation in England, as already hinted, is different from that in Scotland. In England, while a number of theologians have read Brunner, his works are better known among Free Churchmen. Those who know the works of the Neo-Thomists are on the whole ignorant of the Dialectical Theology, so that a live and intelligent discussion on the points at issue is not easy to achieve. In the Scottish Church, which, like the Swiss, is a branch of the Reformed Church, the works of Barth and Brunner are on the whole more studied than in England.

While Brunner's books have not been read much outside of the ministry, they have undoubtedly done much to bring to life the theological thought of younger ministers, and to strengthen their faith. And in his recent Gifford Lectures in St. Andrews on *Christianity and Civilisation*, Brunner managed to do what very few of his predecessors in the lectureship have done, to attract a large and growing number of hearers of both sexes and all types in the most wintry of weather. There are many in Britain to-day who can thank God for what they have learnt of Him from the books of Emil Brunner. It must be a cause of pride for Switzerland and the Reformed Church there, to know that two of the world's five or six greatest living theologians belong to that country and its Church.

BOOK REVIEWS

The Reunion of the Church. A Defence of the South India Scheme. By J. E. Lesslie Newbigin. S.C.M. Press. 10s. 6d.

This book, by Bishop Newbigin, of the Church of South India, is of great value for the understanding of the background of the Church Union movement there, but it is important for us also because of the light which it sheds upon the nature of the Church and its task in the world.

The Reunion of the Church does not attempt to tell the history of the years of negotiation which preceded the union of the South India United Church (itself a union of Presbyterian and Congregational Churches) with the Methodists and Anglicans in South India, which was consummated at Madras on 27th September 1947. Those who desire a good summary of this history will find it in Bishop Stephen C. Neill's contribution to the symposium *Towards a United Church* which the Edinburgh House Press published last year. Bishop Newbigin's aim is rather to defend the South India Scheme of Union by examining the theological issues that underlie it and the theological implications of the various grounds on which it has been opposed.

The book is divided into four parts, of varying length. The first discusses " The Basis of Union in the Life of the Church ". The second examines " The Nature of the Church's Unity and Continuity " at considerable length. This occupies fully half of the book, and is the part which will have most value for the majority of readers of this review. The third part discusses the South India Scheme of Union, dealing particularly with the Standard of Faith, the Ministry, and the Sacraments. The fourth part consists of a single chapter on the importance of the South India Union for the Ecumenical Movement. What follows can only attempt to draw attention to a few points which have importance for the life and thought of the Church in this country.

The younger Churches, seeking to fulfil our Lord's command to preach the Gospel to all men, and being a small minority in a non-Christian environment, find that they are drawn closer together, and that denominational differences are as nothing in comparison with what they have in common. It is all too easy for us, in the older Churches, to regard this attitude of the younger Churches as abnormal. " What is much more difficult is for the younger Churches to understand the astounding complacency of the Churches of the West regarding a situation which so plainly and ostentatiously

flouts the declared will of the Church's Lord. That Christians should desire to be united ought not to cause surprise. What requires explanation is that they should be content to be divided" (p. 9). *We ought to feel the disunity of the Church to be intolerable.*

The New Testament leaves no room for the commonly-held view that the unity of the Church, being spiritual, does not require organic union. "The common use of the phrase 'spiritual unity' to refer to something which is understood to be preferable to corporeal unity, something indeed which makes corporeal unity unnecessary, is totally irreconcilable with the teaching of the New Testament" (p. 50). The New Testament rejects the Greek antithesis between the spiritual and the material, and treats the Spirit and the Body as correlates.

We forget too often to-day that the fathers of the Reformed Church emphasised the importance of the Visible Church. Our thinking has uncritically absorbed many elements of pietistic individualism. It is therefore salutary to be reminded that "The Gospel . . . comes in the concrete actuality of an encounter with God's people. . . There is no reconciliation to God apart from reconciliation with the fellowship of His reconciled people" (p. 28).

> Much so-called spirituality is really an attempt to escape from this method of God's dealings with us into a mystical and private type of experience which, being purely private, is wholly self-centred. . . It is a false spirituality, divorced from the whole teaching of the Bible, which regards this visible and continuing Church as of subordinate importance for the life in Christ. "Those who have God as Father must have the Church as Mother" (p. 29).

The Church is essentially one, and *its unity must be corporeal because it is spiritual.* The unity of the Church is "our sharing in a life of mutual love and trust which is made possible by our rebirth in Christ" (p. 52).

In the West denominations, and even congregations, are too often divided from each other by barriers of race, class, economic standards, culture, theological opinions, or liturgical practice. In South India "the Church in any one place is normally one body which has to include within itself, somehow or other, all the varieties of intellectual and emotional type, all the varieties of class, caste, and culture. . . " (p. 17). This shows that the Church is simply humanity, in all its diversity, restored to unity in Christ. *The Gospel alone forms the ground of unity.* Divisions only arise when men put human constructions alongside the Gospel as part of the foundation of the Church. "These two things go together and mutually reinforce one another—the development of separated groups, and the

addition to the Gospel of other things which do not belong to its essence. . . To add anything to the Gospel is to corrupt the sources of the Church's life and to reduce it to the level of a human association based on some identity of belief or practice " (p. 18). Conversely " Everything . . . which drives men away from confidence in their own intellectual constructions and their own traditions of piety, back to that one central fact which is the substance of the Gospel, has the effect both of making the Church more truly the Church, and of making it more truly a mission to the world " (p. 19). It is no accident that the movement for the reunion of the Church has come as a product of the movement for world evangelisation.

This stress upon the centrality of the Gospel is a wholesome corrective to the undogmatic political reformism that still has such a hold among us in those quarters that have successfully resisted pietistic individualism. Only through recovering our sense of the Gospel can we understand what the Church is and fulfil our task in the world to-day.

Bishop Newbigin examines the view that the Church still exists in the world as one visible body possessing distinguishing marks. This claim, if substantiated, would mean that all the denominations and confessions which do not possess these " marks " ought not to be treated as " Churches ", and that the only way to reunion would be for them to make their submission to the true Church. His criticism of Roman and Anglican theories of this sort is searching and unanswerable.

He acknowledges that " corporeal unity necessarily carries with it historically continuous succession. Continuous succession is but the effect of corporeal unity extended over time " (p. 56). In this he is true to Presbyterian ordination practice, and to the thought of Calvin, and shows a discernment not always found in critics of Roman and Anglo-Catholic views. But he has no difficulty in disposing of the contention that historical succession by itself is the distinguishing mark of the Church.

The theory that the Church is the extension of the Incarnation denies the eschatological relation and leads to deification of the Church. " The Church replaces Christ, and it becomes no longer necessary to refer to the events by which the Church was called into being. The idea of ' the Word ' practically disappears. There is still teaching (*didache*) as to what the Church believes and does. But there is no preaching (*kerygma*) of that Word by which the Church, not only initially but always, lives " (p. 61).

The author lays stress upon *the sinful character* not merely of the individual believer, but *of the Church*, and rightly finds the clue to the doctrine of the Church in Justification by Faith. Hence, " be-

cause the Church is an institution, historic continuity belongs to her proper nature as the visible expression of unity in love. Because she is sinful it is wrong to define the Church solely in terms of historic continuity apart from reference to that Gospel by faith in which the Church at all times lives " (p. 64). " For to treat institutional continuity as the constitutive fact of the Church's existence is to rob it of that life of continual dependence upon the living Christ by which alone it really lives " (p. 66).

The two dimensions of the Church's existence may be expressed in terms of time and eternity. " The Christian believer is . . . connected with Christ . . . by nineteen centuries of Church history, as a member in the Society which Christ instituted, and to which He entrusted His saving work. And he is connected with Him as the living and ascended Lord, present where two or three are gathered together in His Name, meeting the soul here and now in the Word and Sacraments of the Gospel " (p. 71). These two dimensions must be distinguished, but they cannot be separated. Both Roman and Anglo-Catholic theories err through failing to recognise that sin destroys that perfect congruity which would otherwise exist between them.

> The Church is both holy and sinful, as the Christian is both holy and sinful. That is the root of the problem of the Church (p. 101).

Therefore

> we have to look for the *decisive* " marks " of the Church not in its institutional continuity but in the Word and Sacraments of the Gospel in which Christ is constantly re-presented to men in His redeeming work. . . We have therefore to condemn, on the one hand, the view which defines the Church as a historically continuous society . . . because it destroys the eschatological dimension of the Church's existence. . . We have equally to condemn, on the other hand, the view which severs this faith from its necessary correlate—the unity of the whole Body . . . regarding institutional unity and continuity as an optional matter (p. 102).

The South India reunion is " the reunion of divided bodies which are, in spite of their division, nevertheless truly parts of the Church . . . parts of the Church broken from one another by sin but yet held still to Christ by His grace " (p. 105). This rules out any method of reunion which would require some of the uniting bodies to make their submission to another of them. It also rules out the idea that the uniting bodies are completely autonomous, self-contained units, which can freely decide on what terms they are prepared to unite. " Reunion must be the restoring of the unity which has been broken, the fruit of a penitent return to Christ Himself . . . the resubmission of all our life and thought and practice afresh to Him " (p. 105).

The method of reunion in South India rests . . . upon these four points: first, the recognition that the uniting bodies are truly parts of the Church and their ministries real ministries; second, the recognition that the act of union is not the merging of autonomous groups to create a new Church with a new ministry, but the restoration of a broken unity, the return to a ministry standing in the historic succession inherited from the undivided Church with a view to the eventual restoration of a ministry accepted and fully effective throughout the world-wide Church; third, the recognition that the unity of the Church is a reality in the personal realm and that therefore many vital matters are to be secured not by detailed regulations but by assurances given and received in mutual confidence alone; fourth, the recognition that the union can only be regarded as a stage on the way to the wider reunion of the broken Church, and that therefore the decision of certain questions must be postponed till time has been given for growth in unity both within the Church and among those Churches with which it seeks to be in communion (pp. 122 f.).

" The central issue in the debate about the Scheme is in regard to the bearing of the manner of reunion upon the doctrine of the Church's unity and continuity. . . The Scheme itself does not provide an agreed statement of doctrine such as would settle this debate . . . But the method of union which the Scheme sets out is . . . designed to safeguard the Church from wrong solutions of the problem " (p. 106). The justification for this much attacked refusal to incorporate a definite statement in the Scheme is that, just as the Gospel alone, not fallible human expressions of it, is that which unites the Church, so " the basis of union will not be a theological statement which sets at rest the doctrinal divisions between the separated Churches " (p. 105 f.). For " the unity of the Church is not intellectual agreement upon doctrines; it is unity in that charity which is given through faith in the Gospel " (p. 106). So long as " the true preaching of the Gospel and the right administration of the sacraments " are safeguarded, disagreement on any other matter is no justification for disunity (cf. Calvin, *Inst.* 4.1.10). The chief opposition to the method has, in fact, come from those whose doctrine of Church, Ministry, and Sacraments neither springs from, nor is compatible with, the Gospel, and Bishop Newbigin's book deserves a place of honour among the literature which deals faithfully with the views of the authors of *The Apostolic Ministry*.

It would be ungracious to emphasise the one or two weaknesses of the book. Ramsay's chapter on " The Olive-Tree and the Wild-Olive " in *Pauline and other Studies* provides a corrective to Dodd whose opinion is followed on page 32. A fuller acquaintance with the older Church of Scotland theologians with their insistence upon historic continuity, and upon the succession of Presbyter-Bishops to the Apostles " in everything wherein they can be suc-

ceeded " (W. Jameson), might have led him to a more measured appreciation of the value of " the historic episcopate as the Anglican Communion has preserved it " (p. 123). And it seems a pity that, despite his wise treatment of the place of the Bible in the Church, he nowhere explicitly states that Scripture, as the written apostolic testimony, is an essential part of what is meant by *Apostolic* Succession.

Many highly important things in the book have not even been mentioned above, but enough will have been said if this indicates something of the width of sympathy and depth of insight that infuse it, and if many are led to study it for themslves. None will read it without having their horizons widened, and being led to that repentance glorying only in the Cross of our Lord, through which alone " the broken and distorted pattern of His divine life in us will be visibly restored, and we shall be ' filled unto all the fulness of God ' " (p. 190).

JOHN HERON

Marriage in Church and State. By T. A. LACEY. S.P.C.K. 10s. 6d.

THE first edition of Canon Lacey's book was published in 1912. This second edition has been revised and brought up to date by Canon Mortimer. The concluding chapters have been rewritten to cover the latest additions to marriage legislation, and the reviser claims also to have corrected certain errors of the author regarding the doctrines of St. Augustine, the interpretation of Scripture, and the practices of the Orthodox Church.

The book has but scanty practical value for readers north of the Tweed. It does not profess to deal with the human and psychological problems of married life, but confines itself to discussion of the legal aspects of marriage: and this legal discussion is practically limited to Roman Catholic canon law, Anglican usage and English civil law. References to the Reformed doctrine of marriage are perfunctory and unsympathetic, and the marriage laws of Scotland are dismissed in a few lines. Anglicans will no doubt consider the book valuable; but it would scarcely deserve mention in a Scottish journal, but for the fact that new legislation concerning the remarriage of divorced persons is to be considered by the Church of Scotland during the present year. And those who wish to enter the fray armed with a knowledge of the findings of the Church Councils from Carthage to Trent, and of Catholic, Orthodox and Anglican doctrine on divorce, will find a wealth of information in Canon Lacey's book.

A brief summary of Lacey's treatment of divorce may prove

interesting. His thesis is that divorce is not so much a crime as an impossibility. To prove this he appeals to three authorities—Natural Law, Scripture and Tradition. Like a good Anglican he devotes the bulk of his book to research into ecclesiastical Tradition, and does it with painstaking thoroughness. His exegesis of Scripture is remarkable mainly for its brevity. Natural Law, though also briefly treated, is evidently his final court of appeal; for whatever in Tradition or Scripture appears to conflict with the Canon's conception of Natural Law is either explained away or dismissed as an incomprehensible aberration.

Every valid marriage, by the operation of immutable Natural Law, brings into existence a new natural relationship between the parties exactly analogous to the relationship between father and son. Now the father-son relationship is an inescapable fact of nature: unfilial or unpaternal conduct may destroy all spiritual relationship between the parties concerned; but the natural relationship is indestructible. The father is still a father, and the son is still a son. So with marriage: it is a fact of nature that the parties are husband and wife, and this natural relationship is as indestructible as the father-son relationship. Love may perish—all spiritual communion may cease—but only death can terminate the natural relationship. So argues Canon Lacey. Your reviewer must confess that he remains unconvinced: he can see no analogy whatever between a relationship constituted by deliberate choice of the parties, and the involuntary ties of blood kinship.

It will be observed that Lacey's argument admits of no distinction between Christian and non-Christian marriage, at least as regards permanence. All properly contracted marriages are by nature indissoluble, and any decree by Church or State purporting to dissolve such a marriage is in Canon Lacey's words " an impotent pretence ". It follows therefore that a so-called decree of divorce cannot effect anything more than a judicial separation. Parties so separated remain husband and wife by natural law and are not free to remarry. If " remarriage " takes place after " divorce " it is bigamy. Oddly enough, Canon Lacey frankly admits the right of the State to permit this bigamous remarriage of " divorced " persons, though he would forbid Anglicans to avail themselves of the permission. Apparently in Anglican eyes the legalisation of bigamy is preferable to recognition of the reality in divorce. Most non-Anglicans will probably dissent from this judgment.

It cannot be denied that Canon Lacey's description of marriage as an indissoluble natural relationship receives some support from the stricter of the sayings of Our Lord, and from St. Paul's remark in 1 Cor. 6.16. But against this must be set St. Paul's permission

of remarriage to the Christian deserted by an unbelieving spouse. Canon Lacey seems to consider that St. Paul is here guilty of a reprehensible lapse from Anglican doctrine; but it is surely highly unlikely that the Apostle would have granted such permission had he been aware of an *absolute* prohibition of remarriage after divorce by Christ. There may therefore be more to be said for the historicity of Matt. 19.9 than Lacey and many others are willing to admit.

In any case, as is rightly pointed out in the latest report of the Church and Nation Committee of the Church of Scotland, Our Lord's ethical teaching is given in the form of guiding principles, not legalistic rules of conduct. Most branches of the Church recognise this, admitting (for example) that His teaching concerning the use of force cannot be applied without qualification in this sinful and imperfect world. And it is difficult to understand why a Church which admits of such qualifications to the other precepts of Christ, should insist on enforcing His teaching on marriage with such unqualified rigour.

One point which becomes uncomfortably plain after perusal of Canon Lacey's book is that the slackening of marriage regulations presently contemplated by the Church of Scotland, would widen the breach between the Anglicans and ourselves at yet another point, and would make any form of reunion still more unlikely. Whether it should be avoided on that score is another matter.

J. S. McEwen

The Origins of Love and Hate. By Ian D. Suttie, M.D. Kegan Paul. 10s. 6d.

The fine old phrase " cure of souls " should remind us that there is much in common between the pastoral work of a Christian minister and the professional activity of a medical psychologist. The minister deals, for the most part, with " normal " people but he knows that even normal people are spiritually diseased and his aim is to bring them into a state of " salvation " or spiritual health. In the name of Christ he offers them the gift of eternal life, that life of fellowship with God for which they were made and without which they cannot find freedom, joy or peace. Minister and psychologist alike are concerned with the sickness and health of the human soul and it is highly desirable that they should understand one another and be ready to co-operate with each other.

It is all the more unfortunate therefore that the pioneer work of Sigmund Freud and his followers should have alienated Christian sympathy so greatly. In justice to Freud it should be admitted

that the fault did not lie wholly on his side. His uncompromising insistence on the importance of sex factors in human behaviour stirred up intense emotional resistance and his exposure of the ulterior motives which so constantly influence and vitiate the altruistic actions of men made disagreeable reading for conventional minds. But we have learned our lesson. We are prepared to recognise that sex is a most important element in human personality and painful experience has convinced us " neo-moderns " that the heart of man is indeed " desperately wicked ". Few would now deny that Freud made a most valuable contribution to our understanding of the human mind and everyone must admit that—for good or for ill—his is one of the great formative influences in modern thought.

But Freud made the mistake of many pioneers. Having exposed to view one important aspect of the truth about human personality he overworked his new principle of explanation. That error provoked reaction. Dissident schools of clinical psychology sprang up round Adler and Jung and controversy raged between them. Each of these three early leaders attracted followers in this country but, with our typical love of compromise, medical psychologists in Britain have mostly adopted an empirical and eclectic attitude. The development of therapeutic practice has attracted more attention than the construction of a systematic structure of psychological theory.

Nevertheless it is to a British psychologist that we owe one of the most important and suggestive recent studies of those problems of unconscious motivation on which Freud focussed our attention. The late Dr. Ian Suttie's book *The Origins of Love and Hate* is a tentative statement of theories which diverge quite radically from those of Freud and it must be a matter of profound regret to all interested in the subject that Dr. Suttie did not live to develop these theories in a more systematic way.

Dr. Suttie traces the distinctive features of human nature and human culture to the prolonged period of infantile dependence in man. The baby chick is ready to fend for himself from the moment at which he breaks out of his shell but the human infant cannot survive without a prolonged period of maternal nurture. The self-preserving impulse in man finds expression in a powerful instinctive attachment to the mother whereas in lower forms of life it operates through ready-made mechanisms which render the creature independent within a short period after birth. This initial dependence on the mother seems to be felt as " a need for company and as discomfort in isolation ". It persists as such after the sensory needs and satisfactions of suckling have been outgrown and it finds expres-

sion at the adult level through the normal relationships of social life. The whole social environment thus gradually takes the place once occupied by the mother. The human infant must therefore undergo a process of psychological, as well as physical, weaning. In passing from infantile dependence to responsible maturity his emotional life must undergo fundamental readjustments which inevitably involve stress and strain.

The difference between Freud and Suttie is thus fundamental in nature and far-reaching in its implications. Freud conceives the love relationship between mother and child primarily in sexual terms. Suttie regards it as self-preservative in biological origin and social rather than sexual in its functioning. Freud considers that man's emotional nature finds its goal in the release of instinctive energy. Suttie however thinks all emotional expression is seeking to evoke response from others. The need for companionship is, for him, the basic feature in man's nature. Since this need for affection is rooted in the urge to survive any threatened frustration of it may stir deep and strong feelings of anxiety which may find expression in anger and hate. The sources of love and hate may thus be traced back to the relationship between mother and child during the period of infantile dependence. An infant's angry cry is an urgent plea for that attention on which his very life depends, and hatred has its source in frustrated love.

Some degree of frustration is inevitable in the course of child development. The idyllic harmony of the suckling experience is broken by cleanliness training, the process of physical weaning and the possible advent of a younger baby. The relationship with the mother seems to be threatened: the need for love is frustrated and a crisis of anxiety arises. The anxiety turns to anger and hate but hatred of the mother is intolerable since life itself depends on the preservation of the love relationship. Some mode of adjustment must be found.

The nature of that adjustment shapes the character and social relationships of the individual and is itself influenced profoundly by the personality of the mother and by the quality of the emotional bond between mother and child. Suttie notes four possible adjustments. The child may cling to his ideal conception of the mother as good and lovable and " explain " the frustration experience in terms of his own unworthiness. From this mode of adaption spring feelings of guilt and inferiority but also idealistic aspirations. The child may seek to compel the mother's attention by clinging to babyhood or invalidism. This type of adjustment produces the weak immature character which seeks escape from the tensions of the real world. The mother's attention may also be sought by " naughty "

aggressive behaviour. Anti-social conduct, excessive egoism and the craving for power can be traced to this source. Finally the child may turn away from the mother towards the father or some other adult. If this rejection of the mother is not too violent it provides a normal stage in the readjustment of the child's emotional life.

The nature of the emotional bond between mother and child and the type of readjustment which takes place are decisively influenced, according to Suttie, by the status of the mother in society and in the family unit. Suttie traces the typical differences between matriarchal and patriarchal cultures to this source. It is difficult to reconcile some of his statements on this subject but it is clear that he regards the mother-child relationship as more fundamental for character development than the father-child relationship. The basic jealousy in society is the " Cain " and not the " Oedipus " jealousy. It is nurtural rather than sexual and it operates between the children and particularly towards the favoured younger child. The Oedipus situation only develops in those families or cultures in which the authority of the mother in the child's eyes is undermined by the predominant status of the male. In such circumstances the process of psychological weaning cannot be carried out effectively by the mother and the relation between father and child becomes an important factor in human relationships.

These differences are reflected in the characteristic religious beliefs and practices of the two types of culture. The Earth Mother is all important in matriarchal cultures. She is the source of the earth's bounty and fertility rites figure prominently in religious practice. Moral demands are less prominent but her rule, although tolerant, is also unrelenting. Her laws cannot be broken except under penalty of death. The aim of initiation rites and sacrificial practices is to deal with regressive desires and jealousies originating in the child's relation to the mother. In patriarchal cultures the Earth Mother is replaced by the figure of the Sky Father. Morality assumes a prominent place and the problem of guilt becomes supremely important. Sacrifice is now a sin offering intended to propitiate an angry deity and it provides at the same time un unconscious gratification of parricidal desires. Both types of religion have thus a therapeutic function. Religion is not a neurotic symptom, as Freud claims, but a means of dealing with the emotional conflicts arising from the adjustments of early childhood.

In Suttie's view Christianity represents an attempt to integrate the matriarchal and the patriarchal cults. Love and forgiveness take the place of repressive authority in the relationships between God and man while the *agape* relationship between men takes the place of aggressive rivalry held in check by a neurotic sense of duty.

" In fact Christianity idealised the Kingdom of Heaven upon Earth —a human fraternity not dependent upon authority (human or divine), for its solidity and stability, not regulated by competition and not troubled by neurotic guilt and aggressiveness " (p. 147). In practice however Christianity has been coloured by the neurotic problems of its adherents whenever it has failed to cure them. It has therefore shown itself historically in one or other of two main forms which he describes as the Augustinian and the Hellenistic. The first appeals to those burdened by the guilt ridden mind and the second to those who are burdened by regressive desires for infantile security.

Dr. Suttie's book is both stimulating and aggravating. It would be tempting to relate some of his suggestions about the basic human need for security and affection—which is a guiding principle of modern child guidance work—to the Christian doctrine of the Fall. The primal sin of unbelief is a product of insecurity and anxiety and it involves men inevitably in internecine struggle. Dr. Suttie's suggestive hypotheses are much more congenial to the Christian understanding of human nature than those of Sigmund Freud. On the other hand Dr. Suttie also generalises very freely on evidence which is far from convincing. In his discussion of religion his interpretations are coloured frequently by his own presuppositions and his discussion of Christianity, although sometimes illuminating and suggestive, strikes a Christian reader as superficial and, at times, ill-informed. His analogy between the three main " wish-psychoses " (dementia precox, hysteria and paranoia) and the three temptations of Jesus, for example, takes no account of the Messianic significance of the temptations. We may regret, too, although we cannot criticise in view of the main purpose of the book, that Dr. Suttie has nothing to say about the relationship between the psychological ideal of personality and the Christian doctrine of salvation.

The doctrine of man is so fundamental to the problems of modern life that theologians and psychologists need to understand one another. Dr. Suttie's book certainly makes an important contribution to such mutual understanding but it does so more by stimulus and suggestion than by coherent and convincing argument. Had he lived we might have looked confidently for more helpful contributions to this important end in later books. This volume should certainly be read by theologians interested in the problems of human nature but it is not a good introductory book and it is too tentative and sketchy to deserve systematic study. Freud's own writings still provide the best introduction to the body of doctrine underlying medical psychology and the writings of Künkel or Jung are more penetrating and more systematic in their analysis of those

problems of human nature which confront the psychotherapist and the Christian minister, the psychologist and the Christian theologian.

J. W. D. Smith

Conflict in Christology. By John Stewart Lawton, M.A., B.D. S.P.C.K. 20s.

The substance of this book was originally presented as a Thesis for the B.D. Degree to the University of Oxford. The subject of study was the course of Christological thought in English theology from 1889 to 1914. In the survey notice is taken of a few American writers whose work belongs to this period.

The period shows a conflict between exponents of new methods, critical and apologetic, and those who desired to retain the older ways of thought. In the first part of his book the author depicts the various influences and interests which shaped this new mode of approach to the Incarnation doctrine, and which led to what he calls " the collapse of orthodoxy ". By orthodoxy in this context Mr. Lawton means the Chalcedon Formula. Following upon this come eight long chapters which select various themes, central to the Christological history, for fuller elucidation. This elucidation takes the form of long digests of books or summaries of important chapters from books, representing a large array of the period theologians—great and small. Among them appear such names as Gore, Fairbairn, Martineau, Forsyth, du Bose, Garvie, the Cairds, Sanday, W. Temple. Inevitably most of this material concerns the liberal type of thought, with regard to which the author's Preface says: " No judgment is offered in these pages upon the relative adequacy of liberal theology or its fidelity to the Eternal Gospel." The purpose is rather historical and descriptive.

Descriptively this book is very bountiful in its piled up material. Mr. Lawton has a plodding, ransacking kind of mind, and his diligence deserves praise. Yet the method followed—the digest, summary method—is overdone. Much pruning and omission could with profit have been applied to these digests if the aim was a balanced assessment of the period. This disbalance takes another form. In spite of his disavowal in the Preface Mr. Lawton grasps at every opportunity to pass judgment upon liberal theology. But discrimination is not a feature of his criticism and in its personal references its tone is at times infelicitous. Pure Christology, he says, must begin with the fundamental assumption that " the Word became flesh ", and his main charge against the liberal theologians is that they began somewhere else. But this charge cannot apply

to some on his list. Their writings can be quoted to show they too stood on this " fundamental " of faith. What they engaged with was the further question of how, taking the integral manhood seriously, this could be interpreted more clearly for thought and life. Mr. Lawton appears to think that this kind of theological inquiry is not required, for all his references to Chalcedon suggest that the ancient terminology is sacrosanct and alone sufficiently preserves the New Testament position. At this point in his defence (it is rather assertion than defence) of his thesis the author seems to the reviewer to be lacking in historical and exegetical carefulness. There is too much discounting of the perplexities of Patristic theology. Both in its order and in its perceptions the book is ill-proportioned, despite the industry and scholarship that shaped it.

J. Macleod

Documents on Christian Unity: Third Series, 1930-48. Edited by G. K. A. Bell, Bishop of Chichester. Geoffrey Cumberledge, Oxford University Press, 1948. 12s. 6d. net.

This volume (along with its predecessors) is indispensable for all who are concerned for Christian Unity. It is also both interesting and encouraging. The documents are for the most part clear and informative and the keynote of the collection is sounded in the very first sentence, which records " with deep thanks to Almighty God the signs of a growing movement towards Christian unity in all parts of the world ".

A considerable number of the documents deal in one way or another with the attempt to draw together what we rather arbitrarily call the " Catholic " group of Churches. The report of the *Malines Conversations* leaves us in no doubt as to the Roman position. Those dealing with negotiations with Eastern Churches, while bringing home the seriousness of some unfortunate effects which long separation has produced and while recording certain mutual recognitions of technical value, yet seem to carry about them some flavour of unreality, owing possibly to the fact that the Churches in question are not, and have no prospect of being, in daily practical contact within the same area. Is there not also some self-deception in an approach such as that to the Church of Finland, which concentrates on one interest and overlooks so much that is characteristic of the religious outlook of the ordinary member of that Church?

One document offers a plain and important statement on the Historic Episcopate from the *Report of the Anglican Committee on the Unity of the Church*, 1930. This will remain helpful in connexion

with all efforts after closer relations between the Church of England and the Free Churches. Here it is suggested that " the Episcopate occupies a position which is, in point of historic development, analogous to that of the Canon of Scripture and of the Creeds ". The functions of the bishop are succinctly stated. It is agreed " that provision should be made for the due co-operation of the presbyterate and the congregation of Christ's faithful people in the ordering of the Church's life ", and it is emphatically declared that there can be no doubt as to " the spiritual reality of the ministries now exercised in non-episcopal communions ". The historic episcopate is regarded as a necessary element in any union in which the Anglican Communion can take part, but there is no insistence upon any particular theory or interpretation of the Episcopate.

The South India Scheme in its full development is unfortunately outside the scope of this volume, but such documents as refer to it confirm one's impression of its epoch-making character, and show how " the Younger Churches ", like all youth, tend to look forward rather than back, and seek a theology that will do justice to their immediate experience. A somewhat analogous situation exists in Canada, where practical considerations helped to produce the United Church; and this volume includes a Report on negotiations of that body with the Church of England in Canada since 1943 which may yet result in something like the Indian solution.

England would appear to be a very central point in this whole matter of Christian unity. There the Church of England and the group of Free Churches are constantly in one another's presence, while neither side can be said to be dominant. No one can be unconscious of a real issue. This gives importance to the outline of an English re-union scheme of 1938 which appears among the documents, indicating the kind of Church in which the Churches represented might find themselves united without loss of what is specially valuable in their distinctive traditions. The scheme was proposed because of the admitted disabling effects of disunion, and it aimed at unity with variety. A remarkable amount of agreement revealed itself, the Episcopate in some form being accepted along with an organisation which gave considerable influence to presbyters and laymen. This document is followed in the present volume by a *Reply of the Free Church Council* which picks out some of the fundamental difficulties, for example, as to inter-communion and as to the episcopal ordination of non-episcopally ordained ministers, asking whether priority should not be given to closing the ranks of the non-episcopal denominations, reminding us that some sincerely consider re-union neither necessary nor desirable nor practicable. The *Reply* includes a very good statement of the distinctive emphases

of the " Catholic " and " Protestant " types, the one laying the main stress upon the community of believers and the other upon the individual believer. It is rightly pointed out that these tendencies must somehow be synthesised. The problem of state connexion is discussed; also the relation of Church and Gospel; and some convictions of Baptists, Congregationalists and Methodists which constitute special obstacles to union, are noted.

The position in Scotland is different. There the Protestant denominations outside the Church of Scotland are all so small that, while the existing disunity is ridiculous as well as scandalous, the union question can scarcely be said to have been since 1929 a living issue. Apart therefore from the futile talks of 1933-34, Scottish problems have no place in this volume, but Scotland is of course mentioned in connexion with the British Council of Churches and had its share in the 1937 Edinburgh Conference on *Faith and Order*.

The volume includes the full Report of this Conference which met under the presidency of Archbishop William Temple, the sequel to that of Lausanne, 1927. The Report reviews a decade of objective progress in unity, and proceeds to record a large amount of theological agreement as to Grace, the Church and the Word, Ministry and Sacraments, stating also frankly the outstanding points of difference that revealed themselves, a statement which is itself a real contribution to the cause since a thorough understanding of the various positions conscientiously held is an essential pre-requisite to any ultimate synthesis. An interesting section offers practical proposals for better mutual appreciation and for more effective co-operation.

The United States is represented in the volume by Reports on the discussions between the Protestant Episcopal Church and the Presbyterian Church in U.S.A., 1937-47. The proposed basis of Union which was drawn up as a result of this approach is a very remarkable attempt to coalesce these two systems, but the minority report produced from the Episcopalian side is a flat rejection even of further consideration of the proposals. This movement therefore would seem to have been premature, and we are reminded again of the sharp line between catholic and evangelical which is the most prominent fact in the whole present-day union situation. The affinity of Presbyterianism and Episcopacy, however, must be more evident in America than elsewhere because of the very great numerical strength of the denominations which stand further to the left.

The volume concludes with brief references to the Missionary Council at Tambaram and to the World Council of Churches still at the date of publication " in process of formation ".

We should not let our enthusiasm for unity blind us to the fact

that disintegration still goes on. The rise of new sects, especially in America has not ceased; and Fundamentalism appears to be organising a horizontal division to replace the present vertical one. We must, however, be very grateful to Dr. Bell for this further service which he has rendered to all the Churches by collecting in one handy volume these individually familiar historical documents, and so providing a valuable book of reference as to the progress of a great movement towards Amsterdam and beyond.

G. D. HENDERSON

Truth, Unity and Concord. Edited by KENNETH MACKENZIE. S.P.C.K., 1948. 4s. 6d.

THIS small volume was prepared for a Convention of Anglican Bishops in connexion with the Lambeth Conference of 1948, and is a sequel to the volume entitled *Union of Christendom* issued in 1938, when it was expected that the Convention would soon be taking place, a hope frustrated by the international political crisis. A certain bringing up to date was required on account of the world changes of the last decade, and the documents now produced form an important contribution to the discussion of the Church Union problem as it presents itself to-day. The essays are addressed primarily to " inheritors of the Catholic tradition and fellowship ".

The general attitude of the book comes out at the beginning of the first paper where T. M. Parker, writing of *The Nature of the Church*, refers to the " exaggerated individualism " of Protestantism and the need for re-emphasis on the Church with its " supernatural collectivism ". It might be well to realise that Anglicanism of this school offers what may be called " exaggerated collectivism ", providing in this respect a useful over-emphasis. Mr. Parker speaks of the " vagaries " of Wiclif and Luther, and says that the result is " inadequate to the point of being untrue ". This is just what one feels about the standpoint of these Anglican writers, and their contribution will be of the utmost value only when the Christian system is seen to demand room both for this view and for that " exaggerated individualism " which is attributed to so many millions of professing Christians. The political world to-day shows a swing to the communal; but obviously this is not the ideal and does not represent the truth, for both community and individual are natural, and an adequate scheme must somehow combine this positive and this negative, not in any compromise arrangement, but each in its full strength.

It is interesting that Mr. Parker proceeds to the need for a return

to the Old Testament. We hear much of this to-day from different quarters, but is not this tendency merely the same as that of the times? The Old Testament suits the theory of this group, as it suits the political drift of our day. It might, however, be suggested that it was such over-emphasis to which the New Testament offered a corrective, and that the individualism which is such an outstanding feature of biological development, has every claim to the greatest consideration in any ultimate ecclesiastical scheme. The Church of Rome with all its emphasis upon communalism was always able to leave room for even an " exaggerated individualism ", honouring the mystics (while rejecting the quietists) and allowing for Orders which break uniformity. Fortunately most religious groups are in this (as in other matters) better than their theory, and Anglicanism in a marked manner gives Communion to single individuals while the most individualistic Presbyterian insists upon Communion in fellowship, each thus admitting a partial truth which might be thought the special emphasis of the other.

The essay notes the purpose of the Church " to unite men to God by grace ", and admits that external organisation is not so important as a deeper unity. This brings us the idea of the Church invisible, our task to-day being to restore a unity that already exists upon the supernatural plane. Helpful stress is laid upon the need for the visible Church as for elements in a sacrament, and we are reminded that while connexion with the visible Church does not make a Christian, extreme views of the priesthood of all believers are wrong in suggesting that membership of the visible Church is unimportant.

The paper by Bishop Mackenzie on *The Local Church and the Universal Church* has something to say for the Church of England as " *the Church* in its local manifestation ", its claim being " justified not only in the maintenance of the Catholic faith and sacraments, but also in the crucial matter of adherence to the original and apostolic ministry of the Catholic Episcopate ". The writer seems to be in the difficult position of asserting himself on two fronts. Thus with Rome in view he says what the Congregationalist or Baptist might say to him about " decisions of what is in our belief only one part of the Church ", which would doubtless have been modified if " representatives of the whole Church had been in consultation ". The question is, what *is* the whole Church? The writer would apparently only consider such as accepted " doctrines on which the worship and discipline of the Catholic Church have been based from the beginning " including incidentally " baptismal regeneration, the reality of the Body and Blood of Christ in the Eucharist, the Eucharistic sacrifice, the necessity of the episcopal

Order ". He admits that " we must not too crudely unchurch the individual members of the Protestant communities ", but he can only use the test that schism is material disloyalty to the Catholic Church, with an assumed definition of " material " which produces at once " too crude " unchurching. Those outside the writer's circle will notice a number of assumptions, and will feel that the whole truth about the Church cannot depend upon statements as to what Paul " probably means ".

Following upon the discussion of the National Church, the essay gives an interesting, though naturally inconclusive, discussion on " the whole entanglement of Church and State ". There is a hint that separation of Church and State may be inevitable, but that it is meantime " unnecessary to demand what might turn out to be a crippling blow both to our resources and to our influence ".

The contribution by D. L. Popplewell on *The Context of Reunion* discusses the national, the secular and the political context. The author had a fear that constant world change had put parts of the essay out of date, but the usefulness of this very shrewd and well-informed study would not appear to be affected. It is questioned in this paper whether nationalism " as a political and emotional force, has not had its day ", and pointed out that while cultural nationalism will remain (with its attendant ecclesiastical problems), the supernation has arrived as far as economics is concerned and as far as the small state is concerned. In particular we are faced with the problem of the Church and Communism. The present situation in Hungary and Czecho-Slovakia seems fully to justify the writer's anxiety on this point. He holds that " the genius of Catholicism, simply because it accepts man as a whole and makes no attempted abstraction of his religious side, demands some concrete relation with the secular unit ", but he would avoid the complications of Rome's Church party line in politics. There are interesting remarks on the nature of Democracy, the vital importance of the family conception, and other points worthy of meditation.

In the final paper Bishop Eric Graham deals with *Principles of Reunion*, and, while recognising that the present disunity is " intolerable ", would have us go slow and " dig deep " in the matter of union, illustrating the danger by a parallel with Adventists who have a true and salutary message that is falsified by their impatient interpretation. He discusses methods of reunion by the way of submission as demanded by Rome; the method of mere federation; contentment with a lowest common denominator type of Christianity, saving the face of the denominations; and the recent utterance of the Archbishop of Canterbury suggesting mutual commissioning of ministers without waiting for any kind of constitutional reunion.

All these he finds unsatisfactory, the last as really betraying the Catholic conception of the ministry, the sense in which a Presbyterian or a Lutheran could accept bishops being fundamentally different from that, and the acceptance of the fact of Episcopacy without regard to any interpretation of it confusing its mere name with its essential character. The writer asks for unity in Faith, in Sacraments and in Worship. As to the first he insists that " order " is itself a *credendum*, and that bishops are of the " esse " of the visible Church.

A more hopeful sentence reads: " What is required for true spiritual health is the fullest possible inclusion of all that Christians, of whatever denominational allegiance, have found valuable ". The author goes on to refer to the contributions of his own group as " true and integral parts of the Christian way ". This is absolutely right, but it would be necessary to add that Baptist and Presbyterian contributions are " true and integral parts of the Christian way ". He admits that Catholicism in ideal is inclusive; but in practice we find the name reserved for what is no more than an emphasis within the fulness of truth. He rightly calls attention to a growing interest among non-episcopalians in liturgy and in a sacramental view; but it is important to recognise that such movements do not indicate the abandonment of a different view but an approach to that comprehensiveness which alone will be adequate.

In connexion with Reunion one of the vital things is to try to grasp the different points of view, and these four studies are of clear value, not only as self-expression by a group, but as a guide to others to learn from them " what their belief and practice really is ".

G. D. Henderson

Die Schrift und die Kirche. By Karl Barth. Evangelischer Verlag A.G. Zollikon-Zürich.

This booklet contains first, an address entitled " The authority and significance of the Bible " delivered at an ecumenical conference of theologians in Geneva on 5th January 1947, and second, an essay on the Church as " the living community of the living Lord Jesus Christ ", written by way of preparation for the Amsterdam Conference. Both compositions clearly have the Amsterdam Conference in view, and they are complementary the one to the other. Barth insists that the ecumenical unity of the Church is to be judged as truth or illusion by the measure in which the authority of the Bible as the one all-regulating witness to divine revelation is or is not owned and confessed. The Christian community founded on the

word of God in Jesus Christ recognises the authority of the Biblical witness over its thought and life in the same direct way as a child recognises his mother. Of course divine authority does not belong to the scriptures as a quality inhering in them as such. That is the error of the old verbal inspiration doctrine. The Old and New Testament scriptures are in themselves human documents reflecting the fallibility and limitations which are inseparable from all human thought and speech. Their authority lies not in themselves but in their object. They all bear witness in one way or another to a personal meeting of God with man in judgment, grace and promise, to a covenant established with man through the free and sovereign decision of God, to a reconciliation and communion between God and man effected and established through God's own initiative and action. They all point, in fact, to a great divine event, an event consummated in the person and work of Jesus Christ, an event to which they bear witness as the beginning, middle and end of all God's ways with the created world. The meaning and content of the relationship between Yahveh and Israel on the one hand, and of that between Jesus and His community on the other, are one and the same, the grace of the one God to his sinful and fallen humanity. That God and man belong together as Yahveh and Israel, and as Jesus and His community, is the ultimate ground, source, and inspiration of all that the Biblical witnesses, the prophets of the Old Testament, and the apostles of the New, say by way of comfort, warning, and exhortation, to other men. The object of this witness is unique and incomparable, and the relation of these men to this object is of a similarly unique and incomparable kind. They are called out by the word of God through which the community of Israel and the Church is gathered and established. Accordingly their witness is authoritative for the community and for the world. Their witness is the form in which Jesus Christ exercises His rule in the time between His ascension and His return in glory.

It may be objected that the canon of scripture was decided by the Church, and that therefore an authority must be attributed to the tradition of the Church parallel with and even superior to the authority of scripture. But the very idea of a canon implies a recognition on the part of the Church of a witness and a rule standing over its own life and thought. That is not to say that the actual decisions to admit some books into the canon and reject others are in every case final. The recognition of the word of God and the perception of an authoritative witness to that word are a human recognition and perception, and therefore the actual decisions arrived at must in principle be subject to revision. In principle the canon is an open and not a closed canon. That however in no way affects

the fact that, pending further enlightenment, the actual books in which the community heard the witness to divine revelation verily stand as canon, as rule over the Church's thought and life. And the existence of the Biblical books is the guarantee for the expectation and confidence that the personal meeting of God and man will be prolonged and repeated through their word and witness. As this witness is carried on from age to age in the proclamation of the community, so are men called out of the world, gathered in faith round Jesus Christ, and reconciled to God. Thus Holy Scripture, understood as authoritative witness to the one word of God, becomes event in Jesus Christ, is the Church-forming and Church-regulating form of the rule of Christ in the world. To place beside it a Christian tradition for which an equal or even superior authority is claimed, means that the Church is left over to herself, that she becomes her own lord and master, that she has taken Christ under her own management.

The Church is however the living community of the living Lord Jesus Christ. The concept of the Church is that of a dynamic reality. That is to say, the Church is not a static institution but a happening, the actual gathering together out of the world of a people round a Lord who personally bears rule amongst them through His own Word and Spirit, of which Holy Scripture is the concrete witness and vehicle. There is no third term between the community and the presence and rule of the Lord so attested and effected. Only as the Church continually *becomes* the Church, only as she seeks continual renewal and reformation through the subjecting of herself to the Lord who bears rule in her midst, does she maintain her being as Church. As the Church pursues her way in the world she will be open on all sides to temptation, threatening, and attack. She will be in constant danger of losing her character as Church and becoming world; the world, let us say, on its ideal and spiritual side. She will be tempted to confound the personal calling and rule of Christ with some system of religious and moral ideas, some philosophy or world-view, and thus turning Christ into a kind of myth. She will be in danger of substituting for faith in the kingdom of God which is the sovereignty of grace, and which has become event in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the pursuit of some ideal or programme of her own for the reformation of society and the ushering in of a " brave new world ". There are countless forms which this threatening and temptation of the Church can take, but they all amount to this: the putting of man, no doubt the moral and pious man, with his capacities and powers, his ideas, ideals and aims in the place of God and His mighty works and word; and so turning the Christian life from an obedience in concrete

situations and crises into a human pursuit with self-chosen means after self-chosen ends. Thus the Church becomes dead or only half-alive. Along that road the Church merges into Christendom, the body of Christ becomes a society permeated by Christian influences or hardens itself into an institution ruled by ecclesiastical authority, and the Holy Spirit is made a term to denote the inspiration of a human idealism or the sanction of a venerable tradition and institution.

Now it is this threatening of the Church which makes her unity problematic. Where the Church ceases to be the living community of the living Lord Jesus Christ, or where she endeavours to be something in addition to this, she inevitably falls asunder into sects, parties and groups. The fact is lost sight of that there can be only one Church, and that this one Church can in no sense be identified with any institution as such, or with any association of institutions or groups, but with the actual event wherein and whereby men are called out from the world and gathered in thanksgiving, confession and witness round the living Lord. Certainly the Church must ever pay due and proper regard to the right ordering of her life. And in approaching the vexed question of the right order of Church government the consideration which will be uppermost in her mind will be this: what form of Church order presents the fewest obstacles to and offers the widest opportunities for the personal rule of Christ through the instrumentality of the witness of Holy Scripture, in the community?

It will surprise not a few to learn that Barth is now disposed to favour a Congregationalist form of Church polity as over against both Episcopacy and Presbyterianism, though he confesses that present-day Congregationalism needs a deeper theological grounding than it has as yet received and a more ecumenical validation. He criticises Episcopacy and Presbyterianism as savouring too much of an attempt to thrust a kind of third term between Christ and the community, while Congregationalism, in principle at any rate, leaves the relationship between the two direct. Not all of course will be prepared to follow Barth here, but we may allow ourselves to be reminded that an Evangelical Church cannot regard the matter of its order as a foreclosed issue. The Church's order is an expression of her obedience to the personal rule of a living and present Lord, and all questions about order can only be judged from this point of view.

The outstanding value of this tractate is that it poses in a clear and acute form two fundamental and vital questions. The first is this: if the ecumenical unity of the Church does not consist in the recognition of the sole authority of the Biblical witness to the word

and revelation of God, in what does it consist? And the second: if the Church is not utterly and entirely the living community of the living Lord Jesus Christ, what then is it? Both questions challenge a clear and decisive answer.

F. W. Camfield

Die Protestantische Theologie im 19 Jahrhundert. By Karl Barth. Evangelische Verlag A.G. Zollikon-Zürich.

From a purely human point of view this is the most interesting book which Barth has published, since it deals with personalities as well as doctrines, described with sympathy, fairmindedness, and a full knowledge of the subjects.

In his preface he is careful to state that it is not a new book. It consists of lectures delivered to theological students in Münster and and in Bonn, which he cannot any more improve upon in Basel. His object in publishing it is that the young theologians of to-day may gain not only a sharper but a more open eye, for the theologians of yesterday and the day before, with their particular views, which call for much patience as well as humour, because of their obvious limitations and weaknesses. The theology of past times, he says, has to be heard by us, for in the sphere of the Church we are not in an empty room. These living men, now dead and gone, who have handed on to us the truth, as they saw it, have a claim upon our chivalry to listen to them. They speak still, for in the Church there is no past. Augustine, Aquinas, Luther, Schleiermacher, and all the rest are not dead but living. The theology of the present must be strong and free enough to give an attentive hearing not only to the voices of the fathers of the classical times, but of the whole time that has gone before us, and it is from their own relative situation and not from ours that they are to be studied and understood. " That is the concern ", he says, " with which we enter on the task that is before us."

His particular study is *Protestant Theology in the Nineteenth Century*, beginning with Schleiermacher and closing with Ritschl. But recognising that the roots of the nineteenth century run back into the eighteenth century, he deals first with the great men of the previous century. It is a weighty book in every sense, a truly monumental work, and it is lighted up with a gallery of portraits of the men he describes, along with biographical notes.

In an important introduction he lays down " the task of a history of the newer Protestant theology " along the lines we have indicated, and then he proceeds in three other chapters to discuss " The Man of the eighteenth century "; " The Problem of Theo-

logy in the eighteenth century"; and "The Protestant Theology of the eighteenth century".

The eighteenth century was the age of the "Enlightenment" by which we describe the optimistic attempt of man to master life by means of his reason. It was without doubt a renewal, a breakthrough of the Renaissance humanism which had been pushed into the background by the Reformation but had come to life again.

The "man of the eighteenth century" was the antagonist of prejudices, passions, ignorance, superstition, intolerance, and fanaticism. He was the admirer of wisdom, virtue, reason, and Nature. His catch-words were optimism, moralism, intellectualism, and rationalism. He was the absolute man who had stood in the midst of all things in a world that had grown immeasurably greater. He had become conscious of his powers in science, and technique; education came into high repute; in all things, even in costume, there was a striving after absolute forms. In music too, in which, says Barth, a past generation speaks to us most intimately, perhaps there was in a Bach and Handel, and above all in the universal genius of a Mozart, the same striving after the absolute form. The most characteristic figure of this new humanism of the eighteenth century—its most living and striking incorporation—was to be found in the personality and philosophy of Leibnitz who represented it in microcosm.

Passing to "the problem of theology" in the eighteenth century, Barth finds the theologian of the time standing for the same absolutism with which he will master all problems. His attitude to Christianity shows itself along the whole line, the same as his attitude to life. The whole grand attempt to claim the totality of nature and history as something which belongs to man, he extends also to theology. With faith in the complete power of human capacity the eighteenth century theologian sets out to appropriate Christianity. He believes that he has the power and also the right. God must be taken into the circle of the sovereign human self-consciousness either through a State Christianity, or a moralism, or a pietism and individualism. In one way or another Christianity must be taken possession of by man.

But when Barth comes to speak of the actual theologians of the eighteenth century he has little praiseworthy to say of them. They bore no outspokenly heroic character. They were earnest, diligent, sensible, but clearly worried and depressed, and somewhat peevish. They limped along thirty years behind their time. It was very sad but nothing could be done about it. Of the six men whom Barth chooses as representative of the eighteenth century, Rousseau, Lessing, Kant, Herder, Novalis, and Hegel, only two were trained

as theologians, Lessing and Herder. In J. J. Rousseau we have the paradoxical conjunction of two times. He was the child of his time, the summit of the triumphant Pelagianism of the eighteenth century. At the same time he so contradicted the man of the eighteenth century that he introduced a quite other and new movement. Rousseau in the garb of the eighteenth century is already become a man of the new time. Lessing was a completing and completed man of the eighteenth century and an entire stranger in his own new time. He was and remained a rationalist of the old school. Kant was also a true child of his time. Like Rousseau he stood at the turning of the times, but there was no opening of a new dimension, no discovery of new provinces and powers. He rejoiced in the capacity of the human mind and its triumphs in culture and science, and described his religious and philosophic standpoint as " pure rationalism ". His critique of pure reason meant no more than the understanding of the reason regarding itself. In the poetry of Novalis the romanticist, we begin to feel the breath of a new time. But it was Hegel who in himself completed and united all former knowledge and brought the history of eighteenth century theology to an end. He was greeted by the youth of Germany as the Messiah, the fulfilment of the time, the breaking forth of a theological spring after the long winter as it had never broken before. If the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries form a unity, says Barth, then Hegel is the representative of the unity as no other who can be placed beside him. Hegel was a great completer of the enlightenment. In him we hear the mighty voice of the whole age and the voice of the modern man. But there were problems to which he had no answer. That was the tragedy of Hegelianism.

Barth now passes on to the nineteenth century, beginning with Schleiermacher and closing with Ritschl, and including in all nineteen names divided into those who were born and grew up in the eighteenth century, and faced the problems which awaited them in the nineteenth century, and those who built upon the foundations that had been laid and carried them forward. They include such names as Wegscheider, the Lutheran representative of rationalism; De Wette, the historical theologian of that generation who sought to combine philosophic and historical rationalism with revelation; F. C. Baur, perhaps the greatest theologian after Schleiermacher; Rothe, the speculative theologian; J. T. Beck, the Biblicist; Kohlbrügge, the Reformed theologian; Blumhardt, the theologian of hope; D. F. Strauss, author of *The Life of Jesus*, whom Barth treats with exceptional sympathy. But we shall have to pass them over, confining ourselves to the first and the last—Schleiermacher and Ritschl.

Barth's handling of Schleiermacher must be reckoned as his finest contribution, so warm and generous in its spirit. The figure of Schleiermacher, he says, must be brought to light in a quite other way than is often done, much more beautiful and impressive. This he would like to do for the young generation, and as a necessary background for his own Church Dogmatics. We have to do with a hero, he says, such as has seldom been given to theology. "At the summit of a history of theology of the latest period belongs and will for ever belong the name of Schleiermacher and no other beside him." From one whose own theological position is so far apart from that of Schleiermacher, this is praise indeed. No one can say, he adds, whether we have actually overcome Schleiermacher, or whether with all our loud protests we are not still in the deepest sense children of his generation.

Schleiermacher, who was preacher as well as theologian, in his first work addressed himself to the cultured despisers of religion and demanded a hearing. He spoke as the modern man to modern men. He accepted his day, and his theology was in its innermost a culture theology. The kingdom of God he identified with the progress of culture. The ground motive of his religious thought, its central subject, was a theology of feeling, a theology of self-consciousness —the pious Christian self-consciousness which was fundamentally the beginning and the end of his theology. It was undogmatic, indeed anti-dogmatic, anti-intellectual, and anti-doctrinal. He spoke as thinker, moralist, religious philosopher, and apologist, but not as *minister verbi*. Exactly in the place where the Reformed theology spoke of "Word of God", or of "Evangel", he used the words "religion" or "piety". He thought from *man* outwards as the Reformers did from *God*. He did not mean to destroy the theology of the Reformation and he did not observe that his work put all Christian theology in question, as had not occurred since the days of the ancient gnostics.

The result has been that in the place where God stands over against man as subject, a darkness has fallen. Man has become the subject and God the predicate. It is the doing of man which interests Schleiermacher, since man is the centre of things. That man knows himself judged as sinner with seriousness, and as forgiven with the same ultimate seriousness, does not have a place in his scheme of things. An ultimate standing over against each other of God and man is not to be reckoned with.

Barth closes with Ritschl not because he thinks that Ritschl constitutes an epoch in the history of theology, but that he signifies an episode. The Ritschlian movement played an important part as a reaction. As such, and not as the beginning of an epoch, does

it rise out of the stream of events. It was an attempted simplification of the problems which theology has to face in the final overcoming of the Enlightenment.

Ritschl, in order to find a basis for the true ideal of life, which was his search, went back to the Bible and to the Reformation. He was the enemy of pietism, metaphysics, and mysticism. Christianity was a *Weltanschauung*, a view of God and the world, but in no wise an immediate relation with God. Reconciliation with God is an event which takes place in the fellowship of believers—the Church—whereby the sinner is made to be not a sinner. Through this reconciliation we come to know God as the God of grace and forgiveness. But this knowledge of God comes to us only in the form of a " value-judgment " which is altogether different from all judgments of science. It is the historical appearance of Jesus Christ which has become for us the occasion of the knowledge of God as the God of love. He has for us the value of God, and of Him we can venture to say: " He is God." We have the reconciliation, we have the access to the kingdom of God, we have the realisation of our life purpose in no other way than through Jesus Christ in His Church, and thus we can say we have God in Christ.

This word, genuine and impressive as it may have been to Ritschl's disciples, could have no lasting power since it left the actual problems of the Enlightenment still to be taken up. The great service of Ritschl was to indicate through his failure that another form of attack, and another way of exit must be sought if a real overcoming of the Enlightenment was to be achieved. Barth's own belief is that it must be along the road of a better exegesis and dogmatics.

The cumulative impression of this massive volume of over 600 pages is its determination to do justice to every point of view. At no place does Barth allow his own theological position to influence his judgment of other standpoints.

JOHN MCCONNACHIE[1]

[1] We note with deep regret the death of Dr. John McConnachie, whose encouragement and counsel did much to bring this *Journal* into being.

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